

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Friends of the school

We are in a fast developing situation with Covid-19 and it is clear that over the next few days and weeks we are going to have some extremely difficult times in our schools, our community and in our families. There will be great demands placed upon ourselves in personal capacities. We must support each other in thoughts and prayers.

We are living in quite extraordinary times. There is a lot being written in the media about the responses to the Covid-19 virus and we as a school need to ensure that we are doing all we can to safeguard the welfare of all within our community. We have been following the advice given by Public Health England, the Department for Education as well as professional organisations and our Local Authority. We will continue to be calm and measured in our response as well as being proportionate and decisive.

We are continuing to follow the COVID-19 guidance for educational settings which can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

The Government has also published guidance as it enters the 'delay' phase of dealing with COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

We will do all we can to ameliorate the risks that our pupils, staff and parents face. We have decided that we will shrink the school into its core function. In practice this means that:

- Pupils and students will come to school, have their lessons etc. and then return home. **Sixth form students will now no longer be expected to attend form time and will only need to attend their lessons.**
- There will be no trips allowed in or out of school.
- Any planned event involving large groups of people coming onto the school site will either be cancelled (school concerts, sports fixtures) or will be rearranged to be meetings by phone or similar.
- The Year 8 and year 10 parents evenings are now postponed. The year 8 parents evening will now be on the 11th June and the year 10 Parents evening on the 4th June.
- There will be no sports fixtures, both home and away, for the rest of term.

In addition to the above, we have actioned the following:

1. Focussing on the importance of handwashing and good hygiene practices

The core advice we are sharing with pupils and staff is as follows:

- **Washing hands often** - (before eating, after coughing and sneezing, after using toilets and after travelling on public transport) with soap and hot water for 20 seconds
- Use alcohol sanitiser only if handwashing facilities are not available.
- **Covering their cough or sneeze with a tissue**, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#). Tissues and bins are available in every classroom
- Use your elbow and sleeve to catch coughs and sneezes if you don't have a tissue
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands

The following video link may be useful.

[NHS Handwashing guidance](#)

2. Risk assessments

For all trips, activities and visitors, we now are reducing these to the bare minimum to ensure we increase social distancing, following the **COVID-19 guidance for educational settings**.

3. Pupils in school and Absence or Self Isolation

The Government and Public Health England **advise that any person with a new continuous cough or high temperature should self-isolate for 7 days**. Therefore, if a child presents these symptoms at school we will follow the COVID-19 guidance for educational settings above, as set out in paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and contact parents to collect your child.

If your child needs to self-isolate for any reason, e.g. **they feel unwell or another person in the household feels unwell and you are sufficiently concerned that you think your child should self isolate then we will completely understand as a school**. This absence will be authorised and recorded as Medical Absence. You should let us know that your child will not be attending school for the next 7 days, and update us at the end of the 7 days if your child is now in a position to return to school. Many children will be in the same situation nationally and if in doubt it is better to follow the advice to self-isolate rather than potentially put others at risk.

4. Home learning

In the event of a pupil needing to follow self-quarantine or in the event that the school is advised to partly or fully close to pupils (for either a short or an extended period of time), we are getting ready to continue to provide an education to our pupils which will use google classroom as a learning platform. This can be accessed by any electronic device, including smartphones.

Further guidelines on this will be provided when this is ready, but this will take some time to set up so please bear with us.

5. Keep in contact with us

Thank you to all parents who are keeping in contact with us with any queries. We are continuing to review guidance on a daily basis to do all we can to make the school a safe environment for all. I must stress that we have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in our school, but if we do get a case I will inform you. The school will continue to be honest, open and transparent.

To support us with this, can we ask all parents to:

- Make the school aware of any travel plans in the coming months.
- Keep the school up-to-date with any changes to your child's health.

6. Possible staff illness or self isolation

Over the next few days and weeks we may have members of staff who have to self-isolate if they have symptoms or have to take care of children who have symptoms, following the Government guidance to take action, even if you do not have a diagnosis of COVID-19. This may mean we struggle to cover classes with teachers, but we will do our best to make sure our school continues to operate as close to normal as possible.

However if the numbers of staff unable to attend school means that we cannot operate as a school safely and classes might not have people to supervise them, or we cannot double up if needed then

we may have to (*even if we have no confirmed cases of COVID-19*) consider partial closure or even full closure, with some or all classes not able to attend school.

While we hope this will not be the case I do need to share this possibility with you, things are moving fast and we face challenging times in the next few days and weeks.

7. Department for Education coronavirus helpline

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

Thank you for your continued support and if you have any further queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Pinnington