

17 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As you are aware, the coronavirus pandemic is presenting some significant challenges nationwide. I can now provide you with details of our response to the latest government statement delivered by the Prime Minister on 16 March 2020. I have shaped this response under a number of key headings as detailed below.

Absence from School

It is now necessary to ask anyone displaying one or both of two key symptoms, or living in a household where someone else is displaying these symptoms, to stay at home for a period of time and self-isolate. The key symptoms of coronavirus are the recent onset of a new, continuous cough and/or a high temperature (classified as 37.8°C or higher).

I would like to draw your attention to the following points within the guidance from Public Health England:

- For anyone who displays symptoms, they may end their self-isolation after 7 days (the 7 day period starts from the first day of illness).
- After 7 days, if the first person to become ill feels better and no longer has a persistent cough or high temperature, they can return to their normal routine.
- If living with others, then all household members who remain well may end household-isolation after 14 days. The 14 day period starts from the day illness began in the first person to become ill.
- For anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period.
- Should a household member develop coronavirus symptoms late in the 14 day isolation period (for example, on day 13 or 14) the isolation period does not need to be extended for the household, but the person with the new symptoms has to stay at home for 7 days.

It is not necessary to self-isolate should someone come into contact with a person who is displaying potential coronavirus symptoms (with the exception of those living in the same household, as detailed above).

It would be helpful if coronavirus related absences could be reported by ringing the school's Attendance Team in the first instance, stating clearly the reason for the absence.

Access to Educational Resources

Where a student is absent from school due to self-isolation, I would refer students to <https://www.satchelone.com/login?userType=student> where there are many resources available to supplement students' learning. This particularly applies to students in Years 10 and 11, who should direct themselves to English and Science work, and to Hegarty Maths. Students in Years 12 and 13 who are absent due to self-isolation should use the time for self-study and revision.

School Events

In response to the Government's directive that everyone should stop non-essential contact with others and all unnecessary travel, we will be postponing some of the forthcoming planned events, activities and meetings on the school calendar. I have listed below the key events affected over the coming weeks:

Year 8 Curriculum Information Evening – Thursday 19 March: postponed
Year 12 Parents' Evening – Tuesday 24 March: postponed
Piano Recital Evening – Thursday 26 March: postponed
Year 13 Parents' Evening – Tuesday 31 March: postponed.

As with all the decisions we are making in response to the coronavirus outbreak, these measures are not ones which we are implementing lightly, however, the health and wellbeing of all members of our school community will be our priority. Given that the advice is now changing daily, we do not feel in a position to identify rearranged dates for these events at this present time but will continue to keep you updated.

We will review those events scheduled to take place after Easter in the coming days and will communicate our decision at the earliest opportunity.

Visitors in School

From 18 March we will be significantly reducing the number of external visitors we allow into our school building:

- Wherever possible, and if appropriate, meetings will be conducted by telephone rather than face-to-face.
- We will not be meeting with anyone who does not have a pre-arranged appointment.
- Parents/carers will be asked to remain outside the school building when dropping off and collecting their children.
- All after-school sporting fixtures and practices will be postponed until further notice.

This stance may compromise the level of service we strive to provide for visitors to the Academy, however, under the current circumstances we believe these measures are appropriate in managing the risk associated with the coronavirus outbreak.

Other Information

Whilst the measures outlined above will have a significant impact upon our learning community, we recognise the role we play in delaying the spread of the disease and protecting the most vulnerable members of our community. We will continue to follow advice set down by Public Health England, the Department for Education, the NHS and the Local Authority. Please note that, at some point in the future, we may be facing a partial or full school closure, however, this will be determined by either the number of staff absent, which means it is not feasible for us to continue to operate, or there is a directive for us to close. In the event of an enforced closure, we will communicate via local media stations, send you a message through our parent text service and put a message on social media and the website.

Whilst we do remain open, we will do our best to maintain routine for our students, delivering high quality lessons, with a particular focus on protecting the education of those who have tests/examinations currently scheduled for this summer. However we would ask for your understanding that if, in the effort to remain open, we need to adjust the normal operations of the school.

This is a challenging time and we expect to be required to take unprecedented measures over the coming days and weeks. I will continue to keep you updated.

Yours sincerely

J Taylor
Principal