

17th March 2020

Principal: Mrs A Harrison

Dear Parent/Carer

Management of Covid-19

As the Covid-19 outbreak continues, I am writing to update you with respect to our ongoing plans to manage these issues.

School Closure: At the moment, the intention from the government seems to be to keep schools open for as long as possible. We are conscious, however, that this may change quickly. In the event of school closure, we will do our best to provide work for our students using TEAMS technology for Year 11 and Show My Homework technology for all year groups. Please check and ensure your child has log in details. They have been given them again this week in school. We will prioritise supporting Year 11 during this critical period.

Partial School Closure: It seems inevitable that staff absence levels will increase in the weeks ahead as colleagues are instructed to self-isolate, either because they are ill themselves or because someone in their household has become poorly. While we have processes in place to cover such scenarios, it is likely that our resources in this respect will become overstretched very quickly. In these circumstances, we may choose to instruct one of our year groups to stay at home for a period of time. This will then free up a number of our teaching staff to be redeployed to cover other staff absences. If these actions become necessary, we will probably choose to ask Year 9 to stay at home first as they are the oldest non-examination cohort. Further escalation of these issues may cause us to ask Year 8 or Year 7 to stay at home in the near future.

In the event that such actions become necessary, we may need to act very quickly. We may only be able to communicate such decisions to parents on the day itself and will use email and our website for this purpose. If at all possible, we will try to provide such information the day before any school closures decisions are applied.

Student Illness/Absences: The current guidance states that self-isolation is appropriate if someone has a new persistent cough and/or a high temperature, **or anybody in the family has these symptoms. From today, government advice is that should one member of the family have any symptoms, then the whole family must self-isolate.** If you need further advice in this respect, please contact medical professionals as school staff are not able to offer guidance in this area. If you decide to isolate your child at home, please let us know by contacting the school. If we notice students in school with a persistent cough and/or a high temperature, we have set aside a separate room for them to wait while their parents are contacted and asked to take them home. We will need to contact you urgently so as not to put others at risk. **PLEASE make sure your contact details are up to date and be aware of the need for us to contact you by phone.** It is our intention to authorise absences for these reasons.

Some of our more vulnerable students who are affected by the categories for concern yesterday by the government are being educated at home. We will contact you directly if we need to work with you to arrange this.

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Provision of Work: If we need to partially or fully close the school, every effort will be made to provide work and ongoing support for our students, with particular priority being given to our examination cohorts. If students need to self-isolate while the school remains open, they will need to monitor the assignments and lesson materials being posted on TEAMS for Year 11 and Show My Homework for Years 7 - 11 and do their best to keep up in this way. Regrettably, it will not be possible for our staff to set work for individual students who are absent from school for these reasons.

School Hygiene:- We have been working with our school cleaners to prioritise the regular cleaning of 'touch surfaces'. We are also monitoring the toilets on a daily basis to ensure that they are working properly. We would also encourage parents to provide their son/daughter with tissues that they can use during the school day.

For the foreseeable future, we are removing all dining hall chairs and tables and asking students to go outside into open spaces for social times, when it is not raining. This is to ensure we keep large groups to a minimum and help to minimise surface infection. We would ask for support with this.

Dining Hall: In the event that our catering staff are unable to come into school, it is likely we will be unable to provide hot meals during the school day. We may consequently need to switch to a cold service and/or packed lunches for all students. Again, this might be necessary at very short notice. We will continue to monitor these circumstances very carefully, particularly with respect to government advice regarding expected school actions.

We will continue to update you on any changing situations as soon as we can. Please make sure you are contactable by phone at all times and check our website regularly for any updates.

These are difficult times for us all, but we will continue to serve the community in the best way we can. Thank you for your help and patience in trying to manage these unprecedented circumstances.

Take care of yourselves and your loved ones.

Yours faithfully



Amanda Harrison
Principal