



Tuesday 24th March 2020

Coronavirus (Covid-19) - Update for Parents/Carers

Dear Parents/Carers,

I said to you last week that I would write to you again if there were any significant change in the advice we were being given. Last night's announcement by the government has altered the parameters again.

Government advice

The change of action and tone in the government advice is important. We have moved in to the lock-down phase that many other countries have already experienced. There is no doubt that parenting teenage children at this time presents a challenge.

Teenagers have a habit of believing that they are invincible; that is partly why they behave as they do. This is a time that we need to remind them that they are as vulnerable as everyone else. We had reports earlier in the week of groups of students congregating in some open spaces. Any such gathering will now be in contravention of the government's instructions and the police will enforce if necessary.

In your discussions with your children, please emphasise that the community needs to work together to move through this phase. Those actions will save lives and that is arguably the most important message.

Online work

It is very easy to see the negatives in the restrictions to our normal lives. There are opportunities that this also opens up. I hope that in your households that this is a time of greater connection, whether that be sitting around the dinner table or going for a walk together. Talking through the issues, discussing the news, planning for the following day: do not underestimate the importance of these activities in helping to develop and maintain your family unit.

Our online work will continue for students. We accept that we are not in a position to make the progress that would normally happen in schools, but it does help students to maintain the learning habit. If you regard that as the principle role that home learning is undertaking, rather than the quantity of work completed, then that may help to balance how you organise your day. Our Guide to Home Learning is on the website and has had some updates in the last few days.

School site

Our school site is closed to everyone except that very small number of individuals for whom it is essential that they come to school. This includes our playing fields that are not open to members of the public.

Vulnerable children and those of key workers

Specific invitations have been given to the very few students who need to come in to school. We are emphasising that this is only where it is absolutely essential for those who must work as part of the national response to the crisis. Regardless of the work being undertaken, no students should come in to school who have been ill or whose family are isolating.

Our community

The new measures brought in by the government create another world and for some that world will be harder to live with than others. If you know of a fellow member of our community who is in a more vulnerable position, perhaps on their own or in a more isolated situation, please check up on them. An email or a phone call will help everyone stay in touch and feel connected. We may be socially distant, but we should still look after each other.

Take care of yourselves, your families and your friends. Thank you for all the support that you have given the school.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Woodlock', enclosed within a large, loopy circular flourish.

Mark Woodlock
Headteacher