



18th March, 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Update

Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we try to respond to the many repercussions of the COVID-19 emergency.

School trips and other events

The Government has now advised against all non-essential travel worldwide for an initial period of 30 days. This means that, regrettably, we can now confirm that the **Sports Tour to South Africa** will not take place over the Easter holidays. We will pursue an insurance claim for this and will contact those parents/carers concerned when more information is available.

There is, as yet no further information available on the **other international trips** which are scheduled to take place. Please see my letter dated 17th March 2020 (available on the special coronavirus update on our homepage), for advice regarding future payments for international visits.

The following other school trips/events have now been cancelled or postponed:

- Jazz Band visit to local primary schools (19th March 2020) – cancelled.
- Year 12 HE and Alternatives to HE Information Evening (19th March 2020) – postponed.
- Year 12 Maths Fest (24th March 2020) – cancelled. *Parents/carers will be contacted by the Finance Office regarding refunds.*
- Key Stage 3 Cool Lieder music trip (27th March 2020) – cancelled.
- Aqua Festival at John Charles Sports Centre (30th March 2020) – cancelled. *Details regarding refunds to follow*
- Year 10 Parents' Evening (1st April 2020) – cancelled.
- Year 8 Rugby Trip to Rosslyn Park (22nd – 23rd March 2020) – cancelled. *No information available yet regarding insurance, etc.*
- Bands' Night (3rd April 2020) - cancelled. *Details regarding refunds to follow.*
- Senior Rugby Dinner (30th April 2020) – cancelled. *Payments will be refunded via the online banking facility.*

Currently, **all other UK-based trips** are expected to take place as scheduled, though please look out for further information as the situation is changing rapidly.

Once again, we would respectfully ask that parents/carers do NOT contact school to ask for further details regarding trips and visits, as we have no additional information at this time.

Internal and external examinations

Students in Year 11 are currently completing additional practice GCSE papers in English, maths and science. We fully understand that some students will not be able to complete these in school because

they are ill or self-isolating. We will, wherever possible, put the GCSE practice papers students have taken, with instructions for completion, on Firefly. Completed papers can be returned to school for marking.

Year 13 internal exams are calendared for next week and at the moment we intend for these to take place as normal. We will post the exam papers to the students unable to attend so that they can complete them at home and return them to school for marking.

Year 10 trial exams are scheduled for the end of April. To enable students to begin to prepare for these a planned timetable will be sent out shortly.

We continue to work with Year 11 and Year 13 students to prepare them for the external exams in May and June. Currently it is 'business as usual' as there is no information about a change in arrangements. We will, of course, continue to monitor the situation and update you should this situation change.

Students who are self-isolating

At this stage school staff do not have the capacity to send home specific work for students who are self-isolating. Our focus is on delivering lessons to the majority of students who are attending school. If your son or daughter is self-isolating and has access to the internet, then please ask them to check Firefly for any relevant information and direct them to BBCBitesize, or similar platforms that provide valuable learning activities. Self-isolating Year 11 and Year 13 students should be encouraged to revise using the exam papers and other resources that are available online.

Possible full or partial closure

Despite some staff absence we are currently able to stay open to all year groups. Senior Leaders have developed plans that will be implemented should there be higher levels of staff absence, or school closure, in the future. Decisions about these things will be made at the appropriate time, in response to the specific situation and in line with the updated government guidance for schools. In the event of a full closure our plan is to use Firefly to set tasks for our students. Therefore, if your son or daughter does not have access to Wi Fi at home, please inform school as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Support for vulnerable families

We are working closely with the local authority and understand that arrangements are being made to ensure that vulnerable families will get the support that they need should schools have to close. This includes access to food for those receiving Free School Meals. We will update you once the guidance for this has been published.

Handwashing and respiratory hygiene

Government guidance clearly states that an effective way to stop the spread of COVID-19 is through good hygiene. Please encourage your son or daughter to:

- Wash their hands more often – with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. At the very least they should aim to do this on arrival at school, before eating at break or lunchtime, when they get home from school and after using the toilet
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Cover a cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin and (where possible) wash their hands. They should aim to carry tissues with them at all times

New guidance for households with symptoms

On Monday, the government introduced new guidance on whole household isolation. This is:

- If you live with others and you or another member of the household have symptoms of COVID-19 then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14 day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became 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.

The symptoms are:

- A high temperature (37.8 degrees or above)
- A new, continuous cough

The full stay at home guidance for households with these symptoms can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

Please follow this guidance alongside the updated self-isolation guidance (see the link in my letter dated 17th March 2020) and inform the school in the normal way if your son or daughter is not able to attend – clearly stating whether they have symptoms or they are self-isolating for other reasons.

I'm sure you will appreciate that the situation is changing at an incredibly fast pace. We will continue to follow the latest government guidance in order to keep everyone as safe as possible, whilst maintaining a level of 'normality' wherever we can.

Yours faithfully,



Ms Janet Sheriff
Executive Headteacher