



16 March 2020

Dear Parent

Important and essential COVID-19 update for all parents

May I begin by stating how proud of our students I was today. In many schools, the changes to routine would have led to considerable disruption. Because of the expertise of our staff team, and particularly the character of our students, the day passed without any major issues. We must now build on this success as we head into the next few days.

We now face what I believe is an unprecedented challenge and must stay open in increasingly complex circumstances.

You will have seen that new guidance has been issued by the Prime Minister this evening. The main points from his statement are as follows:

1. If one person in any household has a persistent cough or temperature, everyone living there must stay at home for 14 days. Those people should, if possible, avoid leaving the house "even to buy food or essentials".
2. Everyone should stop non-essential contact with others and to stop all unnecessary travel. People should start working from home where they possibly can, and should avoid pubs, clubs, theatres and other such social venues. This advice is particularly important for people over 70, for pregnant women and for those with some health conditions.
3. By this coming weekend it will be necessary to go further and to ensure that those with the most serious health conditions are largely shielded from social contact for around 12 weeks.
4. From tomorrow, the government will no longer be supporting mass gatherings with emergency workers in the way that they normally do.

This presents particular challenges for us in our context but these are not yet unsurmountable. This guidance represents a significant 'step up' in the measures that we are all being asked to take and calls for bold and significant action on our part.

We now need to do the following to ensure we comply with this guidance:

In addressing point 1 of the guidance:

1. Students who have either of the symptoms spoken about (a new persistent cough or temperature) must not come into College and must ensure that they self-isolate along with all members of their household. We will ask that parents collect their children if they come into school with either a temperature or a new persistent cough.

In addressing points 2 and 3 of the guidance:

1. We will no longer run any non-essential activities, including co-curricular activities, after school detentions and academic support sessions. These will not run until further

notice. **However, College will remain open until 5.30pm for students to remain on site if it's necessary for them to do so.** An alternative and temporary behaviour and discipline will be published soon.

2. No visitors will be permitted to visit College, with the exception of contractors carrying out essential work (although this will be avoided where possible) and any individuals providing vital welfare/emotional support services to students. Parent meetings should be avoided, with a phone conversation taking place instead.

In order to enable us to maintain a quality, safe educational provision under these circumstances I have asked staff to cancel non-essential meetings and be available to cover absent colleagues as much as is necessary. I would like to thank the staff team, on your behalf, in anticipation of this significant effort.

As I have said already, these are unprecedented and challenging times, but we have an opportunity to show that we are a truly remarkable school in dealing with these pressures successfully.

With most sincere thanks in anticipation,

Matthew Waterfield
Principal