

17 March 2020

Dear Parents

Trust Statement on Coronavirus (COVID-19)

On Monday 16 March the government released updated guidance to schools regarding Coronavirus. In line with the new advice, we are implementing precautions and contingency plans so we are prepared to meet any escalation. This action is designed to contain and further the delay of the spread of the virus by risk assessing our activity and keep core education going for as long as we can without interruption. Non-essential exposure to those outside of the school community for staff and learners is our key aim.

The most important advice remains, in that the best way to reduce the likelihood of the virus spreading is to avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands and to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds; or to use hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol content, at regular intervals throughout the day. This includes before leaving home, on arrival at school, after using the toilet, after breaks and sporting activities, before food preparation, before eating any food - including snacks, and before leaving school. Within schools we are ensuring to keep bathrooms stocked up with suitable soap products to enable this and continue to reiterate to learners the importance of good hygiene.

Across our schools, site teams have now stepped up cleaning procedures to make sure shared surfaces such as door handles and desks are kept clean.

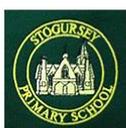
At this time, we are not closing schools as we have not yet been advised by the government to do so. However, as a Trust we have formed contingency plans if the advice or situation changes. The decision to close schools will only be made in response to government advice or exceptional circumstances and as a result we still expect staff and learners to continue to attend school unless there is concern that an individual may be infected.

We have taken the following steps in order to reduce the spread of the virus in our community until further notice:

- Postponed or cancelled all overseas school trips*
- Postponed or cancelled trips in the UK*
- Postponed or cancelled attendance at external meetings where appropriate
- Postponed or cancelled sport fixtures/competitions with other establishments
- Postponed or cancelled use of the school building for external lettings
- Postponed or cancelled non-essential meetings with external bodies
- Postponed or cancelled any employer visits
- Postponed or cancelled visiting speakers and external staff contracted to deliver internal sports/music sessions
- Postponed or cancelled any learner work experience
- Postponed or cancelled parental events/meetings, music concerts, church services and the like
- Postponed or cancelled all Food DT practical (to ease unnecessary pressure on parents to provide ingredients)

* trips taking place until the end of May 2020.

This situation will be reviewed periodically as we receive new government directives/guidance.



For those expecting to take public examinations this year, exam board guidance remains to prepare as normal. However, we will be monitoring official advice and formulating contingency plans to enable us to react to changes should they occur.

The symptoms of Coronavirus are:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- shortness of breath

If any learner or member of staff is displaying symptoms of Coronavirus infection (COVID-19) however mild, they must not come to school. Instead they should:

- Stay at home, self-isolate and not leave the house for 7 days if you live alone or 14 days if you live with others, from when the symptoms started.
- Stay at least 2 metres away from other people in the home whenever possible
- Wash hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water
- Stay away from vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as much as possible
- **You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation.**
- If the symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111

Anyone who lives with someone displaying COVID19 symptoms should also stay at home for 14 days.

Everyone should stop non-essential contact with other people.

The school should also be advised by telephone that the individual is self-isolating. Should any cases of the virus be confirmed within our schools, we will then liaise with Public Health England to discuss the case and the appropriate action which will need to be taken.

Advice for those travelling remains the same, in that anyone returning from a particularly affected area should self-isolate for 14 days regardless of whether they exhibit symptoms. All other returning travellers should only isolate if they develop symptoms of the virus. We would ask that anyone traveling to a particularly affected region considers whether their trip is necessary.

The Trust wishes to reassure learners, parents and staff that we are keeping abreast of the situation and taking all possible steps to minimise disruption and maximise the health and wellbeing of all those within our care. The safety of everyone within our school communities is our prime priority and we will continue to take all necessary steps to protect them.

We will continue to publish statements with the latest advice and encourage everyone to take suitable precautions to protect themselves and those around them.

For the latest government advice please see: <http://bit.ly/3aLFqMy>.

Whilst I regret the disruption that has been caused to school activities which add so much value to the educational experience of students, the health of our students, staff and wider community is of paramount importance to us. Thank you for your ongoing support and I will continue to update you with further information on a regular basis as the need arises.

Yours sincerely



Karen Canham
CEO/Executive Headteacher