

13th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

School response to COVID-19 (coronavirus)

Cases of coronavirus are predicted to increase. This means the likelihood of a student, parent or member of staff testing positive or being in contact with a confirmed case and being advised to self-isolate is increasing. The current situation is that if there is a confirmed case at school then Public Health England will advise on the appropriate and proportionate steps to take. Where a student or staff member is self-isolating due to contact with a confirmed case the current national advice is that schools should remain open.

We are not aware of any cases that affect our school community currently. However, students should stay at home for seven days if they have a fever or a persistent dry cough. If you or your child are unwell, so not go to a GP surgery or hospital. Use the NHS 111 line if:

- you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home
- your condition gets worse
- your symptoms do not get better after 7 days

I would like to reassure you that the health and wellbeing of students and staff is our top priority. Having carefully considered the current situation in Cumbria, we are going to take the following measures with immediate effect:

1. There will be **no parent meetings** in school unless you are notified otherwise on an individual basis. This means the Year 9/10 Parents' Evening, due to take place before Easter, is postponed.
2. Students and staff will not move between Solway and Beacon Hill until further notice.
3. All trips and visits planned for before Easter are postponed and will be rearranged for next term. This includes the Cumbrian Award trips planned for next week. We will take advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) about the bike challenge to Spain planned for May. Decisions on other trips planned for later in the year such as Duke of Edinburgh expeditions will be made nearer the time. Please be aware it may be necessary to take decisions to cancel trips at short notice.
4. All sports fixtures will be cancelled until further notice.
5. We will look to minimise visitors in school. Anyone who does come into reception will be asked to sanitise their hands and be given a copy of the Public Health England leaflet 'Advice on coronavirus for places of education' (attached).
6. We would ask you to consider carefully any travel arrangements you might be planning over the Easter holidays. Please be aware that the guidance about this, which can be found on the FCO website, frequently changes but it could mean that a period of self-isolation might be necessary on your return. Please notify us immediately at the start of the summer term if this is the case.

We are aware that students in Year 11 will be anxious about upcoming exams. Please be assured we are seeking advice on this from the awarding bodies and we will inform students and parents of proposed actions as soon as we know.

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In addition to these actions, we have put in place a number of measures with the students. This includes briefing them in form time and assemblies, putting notices and signage up in every classroom and around the school to encourage good hygiene and regularly checking the soap dispensers to ensure that there is always an adequate supply.

We will continue to monitor the coronavirus situation closely and follow the advice from Public Health England and the Department for Education. The Department for Education's advice page for schools can be found using the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

The most important advice is to limit the spread of the virus. Health-care professionals stress the importance of hygiene and hand washing. They recommend:

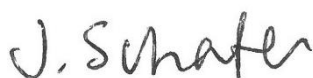
- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Catch it, Bin it, Kill it: Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin
- People who feel unwell should stay at home

Students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:

- After using public transport
- Before leaving home and on arrival at school
- After using the toilet
- After breaks and sporting activities
- Before eating any food, including snacks

We will continue to highlight this important advice to students. We will contact you immediately with any new arrangements that may have to be put in place if circumstances do change in any way.

Kind regards



Judith Schafer
Executive Headteacher



David Davidson
Chair of Governors