



17th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Corona Virus Update

Self Isolation

You will have seen/heard the new advice last night from central government regarding self-isolation and the requirement for anyone living in a household where someone has a persistent cough or fever to self-isolate for 14 days. Again 'ordinary' coughs, colds etc, then girls should still attend school but of course we sympathise in these uncharted waters that parental caution is understandable, so whilst we cannot authorise absence for students being cautious we will not pursue it.

A growing number of parents are contacting the school requesting work for daughters who are self-isolating. Please bear with us for now. It is impossible for us to provide individual work for all the individual students self-isolating across the school whilst staff are still here - albeit on reduced numbers - trying to deliver for the students still here. It is simply not possible to send work home in such vast numbers as emails come in from parents.

There are three possible outcomes that we are planning for and we have an extra-ordinary staff meeting tonight to enable this:

1. Increased absences across the board - staff and students - due to self-isolation;
2. Partial closure;
3. Full closure.

For all of these outcomes we will need to plan for work to be sent home, but this cannot be done on an ad hoc basis as parents write in. Rather teaching staff will need to plan for the work we do each lesson and have resources prepared that can be shared online alongside the lesson in school/instead of the lesson in school.

For this reason, amongst others, we are focussing on 'mission critical' activities to enable staff to focus on planning and preparing additional resources for home learning. So trips, visits, school events are cancelled and Year 11 and Year 13 reports - which were due at the end of term have been cancelled.

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Penshurst Place Trip (Year 7) - Thursday 19th March

In light of new government guidance last night advising against all but essential travel and advising greater social isolation, we have regretfully decided to pull this trip. I realise this will be disappointing but in all good conscience could not let the trip continue given the times. Penshurst Place itself has today cancelled the event anyway and so either we will seek to re-schedule this or look for possible refunds in time.

Other Trips

As I wrote yesterday (other trips) - Madrid, Namibia etc. are likely to be postponed or cancelled altogether. A very fast moving situation and we will endeavour to reschedule where possible and keep parents/girls informed as soon as possible. As of next week, assemblies, visitors to the school, excursions out of school will cease and we have plans to re-organise lunchtime to reduce 'mass gatherings'

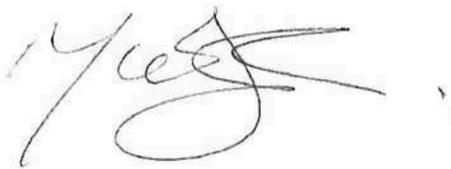
Rumours

Despite the rumour mill, at present the school has had no confirmed cases of corona virus in our school community - students, staff, governors and their families etc. Of course there are students and family members with coughs and colds and some are self-isolating, but there have been to date no confirmed corona virus cases in or around the school community.

Communication

It is likely that there will be further news/developments and we will continue to communicate with parents as necessary. Please do be aware though that as the current situation develops it is likely that we will be subject to staff shortages too and that therefore phone calls and emails may not be responded too as quickly as normal. At all times we will try to be pro-active in our communication.

Yours sincerely



Mr Mark Lester
Principal