



KIRK HALLAM
COMMUNITY ACADEMY

17th March 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

As you are probably aware, the government has significantly changed its advice regarding managing COVID-19 (Coronavirus). At this moment in time the government isn't instructing schools to close, and we have been trying to maintain as normal a service as possible, but safeguarding pupils and staff is of paramount importance.

The latest government advice means that any pupil or member of staff for whom COVID-19 represents a serious health risk due to underlying health conditions* **must not** attend school. This may also affect pupils and staff that live closely with a relative with an underlying health condition, for whom social distancing is not practicable. This is in addition to pupils or staff that present coronavirus symptoms themselves (new and persistent cough; difficulty in breathing; fever), who should isolate themselves for 14 days.

*The underlying health conditions identified by National Health England as increasing the potential risk of contracting COVID-19 are:

- chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#), emphysema or [bronchitis](#)
- chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](#)
- [chronic kidney disease](#)
- chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](#)
- chronic neurological conditions, such as [Parkinson's disease](#), [motor neurone disease](#), [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
- [diabetes](#)
- problems with your spleen – for example, [sickle cell](#) disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as [HIV and AIDS](#), or medicines such as [steroid tablets](#) or [chemotherapy](#)
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)

Given these recommendations, the principal difficulty we now face as a school is that a significant number of staff are not able to attend school because of their symptoms, their underlying health issues, or because of their immediate family's health position. We have therefore decided that **pupils in Years 9 and 10 are not to attend school until further notice**. Unfortunately, the guidance also means we will be postponing the Year 9 Parents' Evening which was due to place on Wednesday 1st April.

As a staff we are working on plans that will allow us to set work on line, and in paper-based work packs that will be available from school reception later this week. In the meantime, I would ask that pupils spend time everyday reading, and use on line resources such as BBC Bitesize.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your understanding and consideration in response to this unique situation. In all my years in education I have never witnessed such a challenging scenario. Your support is valued and we will use our school website to provide you with updates as this situation unfolds.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Watts
Head of School

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