



March 2020

## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dear Parent/Carer

I write to you today to keep you updated in relation to the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance supplied by the Department for Education and Public Health England and our current plans. As I am sure you will understand, it is very difficult to keep up with events, but we have taken steps in school to plan as best we can and I would appreciate your support and understanding.

We receive daily updates from the Department of Education and Public Health England. Current advice is that no school should close unless advised to do so by Public Health England.

### 1. Self-Isolation

Government advice is that everyone should self-isolate by staying at home for 7 days if either of the following symptoms present:

- a high temperature (37.8 degrees and above); hot to touch on the chest or back
- a new, continuous repeating cough

Those self-isolating do not need to call NHS 111 to stay at home. If symptoms worsen whilst at home or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk. Those without internet access should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

**Please call Mr Edis, Attendance Manager, on 0121 556 4131 if anyone in your household is self-isolating and you are not sure if your child should attend school. Students that are self-isolating should complete work on the online platforms SAM Learning, MathsWatch, BBC Bitesize and Seneca Learning.**

Should you decide to isolate your child, please do so for the full 7 days so that they are clear of any virus before they return to school. The current guidance from the NHS is as follows (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>):

**NHS "Dos and Don'ts are at end of this letter.**

### 2. Action we are currently taking:

#### **Raising Awareness – Handwashing, using a tissue and avoiding hand to face contact.**

All students have been spoken to during form time about personal hygiene and how to prevent or delay the spread; primarily following the NHS and Government guidance of hand washing, using a tissue and avoiding hand to face contact. During assemblies this week we will reiterate this message.

#### **Hand washing and sanitising gels**

We are regularly replenishing the soap in the hand dispensers in all the toilets. Last Wednesday all students that have lunch at school were directed to the toilets to wash their hands before eating. Staff are integrating hand washing time into the school day as and when possible. It is your child's responsibility, however, to look after themselves and others by hand washing 6 times a day. Students can bring hand sanitiser to school.

### **Contingency planning**

The Government is planning for a range of future scenarios, one of which includes a temporary school closure. Should we have to close at short notice our plans are below:

- We have remote access to the parent/carer and student databases (SIMS/SchoolComms) and can therefore email parents/carers to keep them updated. This, and our website will provide up-to-date information. Please ensure that you check these regularly
- Student learning: It is vital that, if we have to close, students continue to work. We will set regular work electronically via ClassCharts. If we get a day's notice we will, where possible, send the students home with learning materials as appropriate.

Parents/carers can support us by doing the following:

- Making sure your son/daughter has access to their school email account and ClassCharts from home wherever possible
- We will use ClassCharts to communicate what work is being set for the teaching groups your son/daughter has so please ask them to check it regularly

### **School trips**

The government advises against any overseas trips. The government is not currently advising against domestic trips.

At the time of writing, my intention is for the following school trips to go ahead as normal:

- Ongoing sports competitions
- Year 7 Kenilworth Castle trip (23<sup>rd</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020)
- Year 9 Carding Mill Valley Geography trip (20<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020)
- Year 10 Art trip to Wolverhampton University, (25<sup>th</sup> March 2020)
- Year 9 & 10 trip to Blenheim Palace, (31<sup>st</sup> March 2020)
- Year 10 Art trip to Tate Modern, (6<sup>th</sup> May 2020)

The following trips are currently at risk; I will update you asap:

- Year 9/10 WW1 Battlefields trip (9<sup>th</sup> July 2020)
- Year 7 German Residential (11<sup>th</sup> July 2020)
- Y8/Y10 French Residential (11<sup>th</sup> July 2020)
- Y12 Monkton Wyld Biology and Geography (13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> July 2020)

We will review the Government guidance regularly and review trips that are scheduled to go out after Easter and will again write home to advise parents/carers on the advice closer to the time. Please note that we will follow Foreign Office and the Department for Education guidance. This will ensure that any insurances are valid.

### **School Events**

There are some indications that the government might cancel non-essential gatherings of large groups of people. With this in mind, the following school events for parents, carers and visitors are cancelled:

- Wed 18<sup>th</sup> March: Y6 Maths PIE
- Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> March: Gym and Dance Show (students and staff should still attend)
- Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> March: Post 16 Event
- Weekend lettings, (until further notice)

### **Visitors to school**

Only visit the school if you have an essential and agreed appointment

### **Examinations**

JCQ (the regulatory body for examinations) have advised that Headteachers should do all they can to ensure examinations run and schools remain open. They add that, if schools have to close prior to the external examinations, we try and find alternative methods of supporting students. I know that this will be a concern for our current Year 11 and Year 13 students, but, until we are advised differently, we will continue to plan for the examinations as normal. Please support your son/daughter by ensuring they have a revision plan in place that they can continue to follow should there be any extended closure.

### **Staff absence**

It is possible that as a school we may be open but we may see higher than usual numbers of staff being absent due to illness. Whilst you may have read in the news that the government is 'relaxing' the law relating to maximum class sizes, in practice this has no real practical meaning for secondary schools. Many of our classrooms are already at maximum capacity and students are taught in subject specialisms. We will, of course, do everything we can to remain open, but we may have to prioritise examination classes and we may have to offer partial opening for some year groups. Your son/daughter's safety is our priority and we would always look to give as much notice as possible if this decision were to be taken, obviously as a last resort.

### **Mental health and well-being**

The coverage of the coronavirus has the potential to cause anxiety amongst the students. The UK Chief Medical Officers have currently classified the risk to the public as low to moderate and the risk to children is very low. Please support us by continuing to send your son/daughter to school and if you are concerned about anything please contact the helpline below. If concerns are directly related to school then students should use the Speak Out button on the website.

We are currently risk assessing upcoming school events and each one will be carefully considered. If we make the decision to postpone any event we will inform you accordingly.

Please continue to be reassured that it still remains the case that we currently do not have any confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst staff or students at Wood Green Academy and at the time of writing there is only one confirmed case of the virus in Sandwell. Government Dashboard:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/f94c3c90da5b4e9f9a0b19484dd4bb14>

Many thanks



Mr J Topham  
Headteacher

## **Covid 19 Self Isolation - NHS Dos and Don't**

### **Do**

- try to keep at least 2 metres (3 steps) from other people in your home, particularly older people or those with long-term health conditions
- ask friends and family and delivery services to deliver things like food shopping and medicines – but avoid contact with them
- sleep alone if possible
- regularly wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- try to stay away from older people and those with long-term health conditions
- drink plenty of water and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, to help with your symptoms

### **Don't**

- do not have visitors (ask people to leave deliveries outside)
- do not leave the house, for example to go for a walk, to school or public places

More detailed advice from Public Health England is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>