



17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents

## Coronavirus (COVID) – an update

The situation nationally concerning the coronavirus is changing constantly and we are carefully monitoring the regular updates from Public Health England, the NHS and Lancashire County Council on matters relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of our pupils and other members of our school community.

I need to make you aware of the current position in school which is that our absence rate is five times higher than normal. We have a large number of pupils who are self-isolating through displaying coronavirus symptoms and am conscious of the guidance given yesterday regarding the need for households to self-isolate for 14 days where a member of a household is displaying symptoms of COVID-19.

### Actions already taken to minimise the spread of the virus

- Hand sanitisers were installed throughout the school at the end of January.
- The school's cleaning regime has been strengthened with cleaning taking place constantly during the day and all hard contact surfaces cleaned.
- Guidance on washing hands, using sanitisers and preventing the transmission of germs has been provided for pupils through assemblies and forms.
- All non-essential activities and events have been cancelled.
- We wish to minimise the sharing of equipment between pupils. Your help in ensuring that your son/daughter has a full set of equipment (pens, pencils, rulers, erasers, protractor, calculator etc.) for each day would be appreciated.

### Planning for school closure

- Extensive planning has taken place to ensure continuity of learning if we are directed to close.
- Pupils will be given clear guidance on these arrangements with Firefly being used to set work.
- For pupils unable to access the internet, we are preparing paper-based packs.

### Self-isolation

- We follow the guidance published yesterday by the government: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- In the event of your child displaying a high temperature, a new cough or shortness of breath during the school day, s/he will be seen by one of our first-aiders prior to being placed in a room for isolation. You will then be contacted to collect them unless medical advice says otherwise. S/he should then be isolated at home for 14 days. At an appropriate time, we will contact parents to see whether or not they would like work for the pupil to complete at home.
- Please do not send your child into school if s/he displays any of the symptoms described above.
- In light of the guidance for self-isolation, it may be necessary for us to merge classes and implement a partial closure of the school (designated year groups) if staff absence leads us to taking such measures.

### What should I do if I think that my child has contracted the coronavirus or been in contact with someone who has?

- In the first instance, use NHS 111 online - <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> If you have been advised that your child has coronavirus, please email [attendance@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk).
- We will always notify parents, staff and pupils as soon as we become aware of anyone within school who has contracted the coronavirus.

### What will happen with arrangements for the GCSE exams?

- At the time of writing, we, together with all other schools, are awaiting for guidance from OFQUAL regarding arrangements for this year's exams and will update you as soon as we receive information.

I am aware of local schools closing or being partially closed as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and we are reviewing our own position on a daily basis particularly in light of the guidance given yesterday on protecting those most vulnerable to the effects of the virus such as pregnant women, those aged over 70 and those with an underlying medical condition. I know that these are challenging times for all of us and assure you that we will continue to ensure that the health of your child, your family, our staff and their families is our highest priority.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Grice  
Headteacher