



17 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Following yesterday's updated guidance from the Government and Public Health England, I am writing to outline the actions the school is taking to support our students, families and staff.

We are aware this is a rapidly changing situation and our response will be informed by the daily briefings from central Government, in addition to advice from Public Health England and the Local Authority. At this current time, the Government's policy remains that schools should remain open. We will of course keep you updated with any further information and implications.

Advice regarding isolation

The advice regarding isolation has been updated. As such, if one member of your family household has a new, continuous cough or high temperature, all members should stay at home for 14 days.

Non-essential social contact

The advice regarding non-essential social contact has changed. In order to support this, the school has taken the following actions:

- All trips and visits planned for the immediate future have been cancelled or postponed
- Assemblies for whole year groups have been suspended
- Sports fixtures have been suspended
- The school show has been postponed

Absence

Absences will be authorised in the following instances:

- For any student involved in household isolation
- For any student with an underlying medical condition (at risk) who has been advised by their clinician to stay at home
- For any student with a household member who has an underlying medical condition and has received advice that all household members should restrict contact

Parents/carers should keep the school informed regarding their child's absence (please notify us of absence through our preferred method, Insight, or via email to attendance@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk) and discuss their return to school with the school's Attendance Officer.

Setting work for students who are absent

If students are absent, but well enough to complete work, a centralised resource/activity bank can be found on the school's website.

School Closure

Should the school be required to close, this may be on a full or partial basis e.g. open to certain year groups only. In these circumstances, the school will follow the usual school closure procedures as detailed on the school's website. (Home > Contact > School Closure)

Plan for remote learning

If the situation develops, and the school is required to close, there is a plan for remote learning which will be shared with students, parents and carers and will outline the expectations for remote learning, specifically:

- How staff will deliver the curriculum remotely
- How students will be able to access the curriculum remotely
- How parents can help to provide support for their child's learning
- How remote learning will operate if staff are unwell
- What to do if there are issues with connectivity and accessing the curriculum

The first day of closure will be used by staff to plan, and set up, the first phase of remote learning for their classes. For students, or staff, who might be disadvantaged through the use of digital systems, additional support will be provided as far as is practically possible. Guidance on eSafety will be reiterated to students and staff and made available to parents/carers.

Communication

Communication will continue through the school's usual channels and we would ask that all stakeholders ensure we have their correct, updated contact details. I would also ask that any communication with the school regarding coronavirus is limited to informing us of any changes to your child's/family's health, particularly in relation to their attendance. As I am sure you will appreciate, the changing situation requires school leaders to prioritise responses to national advice and contingency planning, and therefore, we will not be able to respond to individual emails of a general nature regarding the situation.

Public Examinations

We appreciate that many of our older students will be worried about the impact of the current situation regarding their public examinations. There are well-established processes in place for dealing with many of the scenarios which a coronavirus outbreak might cause, including individual students missing exams due to illness. We will ensure there are appropriate contingency plans in place to deal with all eventualities should there be a widespread outbreak of coronavirus over the exams season and will ensure that advice and updates received from examination boards, JCQ and Ofqual are communicated to students and parents.

Once again, I would like to thank the whole school community for their support and understanding.

Yours sincerley

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Shapland', written in a cursive style.

James Shapland
Headteacher