

16 March 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer

### Coronavirus Update 1

Given the unprecedented pressure and uncertainty schools are dealing with at the moment I thought it timely to write to all parents and carers to explain our strategy and plans in dealing with the coronavirus situation at the present time.

The Academy will continue to follow the advice from the Department of Education, and the Department of Health & Public Health England with regard to coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak.

As of today the Government have made it clear that schools will remain OPEN. At CVEA we currently are fully staffed in all areas and will continue to deliver our outstanding education to your children.

We have circulated messages to all staff, students and parents about how to wash hands properly and advise you all to encourage good hygiene habits for all. We have hand sanitiser in main reception, restaurant and other locations in school. Washing with soap and hot water is encouraged at all times, toilets are being checked and refreshed regularly. All the DfE updates are placed on our website daily. We are also working on ways to ensure continuity of educational provision should the Academy have to close; either as a result of a case being identified in our school or in response to a government instruction, or in the event that we do not have enough staff in the building to deliver lessons and ensure the health and safety of our students. In this case we would focus on teaching Year 11 students and their preparation for examinations in the summer.

If the Academy was to close, we have well developed plans for a mix of on-line learning and paperwork. We are setting up and checking that all students have access to Class Charts, school subject Apps, email etc. on their phones, and hope they can access packages at home. Where students have no phone or internet we will provide work booklets.

Like all other schools, we await a final decision on public examinations this summer. I am conscious this adds pressure to our students sitting their GCSE's this year, but at present we can do nothing other than to plan as normal. Should that change in any way, I will of course let you know immediately and we will make any necessary adjustments at the time.

With regard to school trips, sports fixtures, visits to school, we shall again follow best advice and judge each situation according to its specific circumstances. It is a matter of great regret that we had to cancel our two trips abroad, the Football Tour to Amsterdam and our 'Peace Village' trip to the Battlefields of Belgium. This was based on the Prime Ministers recommendation advising that the (Foreign and Commonwealth Office FCO) were advising against school trips abroad.

Today we are reviewing all our external activities and have decided that we will cancel and postpone all internal UK visits to Universities and work visits and we will severely limit external visitors to the school as part of our support for 'social distancing'.

The Year 10 parents evening on Wednesday night will be cancelled as will the Year 9 one on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. We will complete a brief report for parents, email it out and follow up with any concerns via email or phone calls to staff. All SEND reviews will take place over the telephone.

External meetings will be cancelled on site, except for those of an 'urgent' safeguarding nature. Parents are asked NOT to attend the school and wait in reception but to use the [enquiries@cvea.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cvea.co.uk) or specific staff email addresses which may have been shared with you.

Whilst we are running the school it is very difficult to answer the high volume of calls we are taking on a daily basis. If you need a call back we can 'book' a time to do this which staff can manage when they are not teaching or supervising.

I would also ask that if your children show any symptoms of the infection you should follow the government advice at that time. We cannot make a decision for you. We will follow the DfE guidance regarding how to code this as an absence, currently for 5 school days. The link below gives you lots of guidance; <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>.

With the holiday time fast approaching we are aware that most holiday areas have closed their borders or have very restricted access/travel arrangements. Please could I remind parents that anyone visiting any of those areas should not come into school for 14 days after their return. Countries listed by the NHS, and the FCO are constantly being updated and we ask that you keep up to date with announcements as lists and information are subject to change on a daily basis.

Please be assured that our key objective is to ensure that the Academy continues to operate as normally as possible in these very challenging circumstances and without in any way endangering the health and safety of any members of the school community, their families and friends.

With that in mind, and again following government advice, there is no reason at present for children who are showing no symptoms not to attend school. Internally we will do all we can to minimise risks.

We will continue to monitor the situation and keep you informed of any changes. Please check your emails regularly and update us with any email / telephone number changes.

Yours faithfully



Mrs J S Bridges OBE  
Principal

