



13 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Over recent weeks, we have been closely monitoring the developing situation regarding the Coronavirus. We receive daily email updates from Public Health England and the Department for Education. These updates provide advice and guidance for all schools regarding the current national position and possible future scenarios.

As you will no doubt be aware, government guidance is now that you should self-isolate for 7 days if you have a 'new, continuous' cough or high temperature'. We have provided this information to all of our staff and students during school today and will place this letter onto our website and school Facebook page. If your child needs to self-isolate, please notify us in the usual manner by phoning 01749 345555.

As you can imagine, the decision made yesterday to ask individuals to self-isolate for 7 days if they have the symptoms outlined above, does mean that schools may need to close over the coming days and weeks due to staff absence. Whilst this is something I want to avoid, the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff is of paramount importance. One option over the coming days may be a partial school closure should staff levels drop considerably. If we do need to close Whitstone School, students will be informed through assemblies led by members of the Senior Leadership Team to ensure a calm and consistent message is delivered. Parents and carers will be informed by letter, an Epraise message and communication through the school website and Facebook page. I will endeavour to make decisions as early as possible however, I would ask that you pay particular attention to the school website and Facebook page for regular updates.

We have planned for a number of different scenarios. Staff are prepared for a range of eventualities and will ensure that, should there be a directive from Public Health England to close the school, all students will be supported in an appropriate manner. This is particularly true of our Year 11 students who will be given additional revision materials, access to a wealth of online learning and additional Epraise communication. Opportunities are planned throughout the coming months to support our Year 11 students should there be any temporary change to their normal education.

As you will no doubt be aware, the most effective action we can currently take is to wash our hands thoroughly. Posters have been displayed around school and in toilets to ensure that students follow this protocol, additional soap dispensers have been put in place and our cleaning staff are disinfecting all surfaces at the end of each day.

Thank you for your support to date.

Yours faithfully

Mr Guy Swallow
Headteacher