

Highworth Warneford School

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Dear Parents/Carers

I just wanted to write to give you the latest update with regards to Highworth Warneford School's response to the current COVID-19 outbreak.

As previously communicated, we have been following advice from Public Health England (PHE) and paying very close attention to updates – which now come out daily. As things stand, that advice is for the school to stay open and carry on as normal. If there were to be any cases of the coronavirus connected to the school, PHE would then make further specific recommendations that we would immediately tell you about.

We are aware that the government is considering the timing of the next stage of the national response, which will be to accept that the virus is spreading and attempt to reduce the peak of the outbreak – what is being called the delay phase. One possible tactic will be to shut some or all schools for a period of time. If this does happen, we would follow our normal routines for closure i.e. assume the school is open unless told otherwise.

To anticipate some questions and concerns:

- We have ensured that all of our online learning platforms are working should there be a need to set work for students remotely. **All** students need to make sure that they can access Class Charts, as this will be the primary method of passing work on. We recommend that you check that usernames and passwords for this are working and ask for support if needed. Similarly, students need to ensure that they can access both GCSEPod (Y10/11) and Activelearn (Y7-11). The expectation is that learning will continue during any enforced closure and we appreciate your support in making this happen.
- We understand that not all families will have access to a computer, internet and printer and, even if they do, there might be several children all wanting to use a computer at the same time. We will endeavour to also supply some work that can be done without technology but it would be very helpful if you could make sure what you do have is working and see if you can share other facilities if access at home is tricky.
- Students who are preparing for external examinations this summer will clearly be our priority in terms of support during any closure. OFQUAL, the body that looks after national exams, has already said that, whatever happens, students taking exams will not be disadvantaged. This might mean changing moderation arrangements for practical exams and looking closely at grade boundaries in the summer. We will keep you informed as news comes in about this.

cont.../2

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- If there is a closure, this will impact on a variety of school activities. For example, some sports tournaments and fixtures have already been cancelled where there have been specific concerns. Key events such as parents' evenings will be rearranged but non-vital activities may simply be shelved for the year. These decisions will be made on a case by case basis and communicated. Mr McKinstry is specifically looking at ways to support the options process for Year 9 students – there is plenty of time to do this, so please do not worry.

In summary, I believe that we are well placed to respond to the next phase of the government's actions to delay the spread of the coronavirus. If you have any concerns at all then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully



Andy Steele
Headteacher