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16 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Covid-19 Coronavirus Update - Evening 16/3/20

We are just receiving news of new government guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people>.

We don't have all the details (we'll pass them on as soon as we have) but what we know tonight is:

- If you, your child or anyone in your family has symptoms (temperature of 37.8 degrees and above and/or a new, sustained cough) then **the whole family should self-isolate for 14 days**. Please confirm this with the school in the normal way (emailing attendance@school21.org.uk by 8:30am or leaving a message on the school answerphone 0208 262 2121 option 1 - emphasising that you will be self-isolating. Please of course contact NHS 111 or your GP as you see fit.)
- There is also general advice (in the link above) to members of the public to keep a '**social distance**'. This means avoiding restaurants, bars, public places, as well as public transport and contacts outside the family (all information in the link above).
 - **As a result, we are now stopping visitors from coming to the school. This excludes parents and carers and our music teachers who are with us for the week, but includes external club providers**
 - **Halting the real world learning placements for Year 10 and 12**
- Social distancing is particularly important for vulnerable groups. There is specific guidance in the link above but this group includes people:
 - aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
 - under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
 - chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#), emphysema or [bronchitis](#)
 - chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](#)
 - [chronic kidney disease](#)
 - chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](#)
 - chronic neurological conditions, such as [Parkinson's disease](#), [motor neurone disease](#), [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
 - [diabetes](#)
 - problems with your spleen – for example, [sickle cell](#) disease or if you have had your spleen removed

- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as [HIV and AIDS](#), or medicines such as [steroid tablets](#) or [chemotherapy](#)
- being seriously overweight (a BMI of 40 or above)
- Those who are pregnant

There are additional groups of people for whom there are additional safeguards being put in place by the government (please see at the end of the letter)

If any of the above conditions are relevant to your children, please keep them at home and let the school know. It is likely they will need to be off school for a number of weeks

As this information is relevant to our staff too, we may be in a position tomorrow morning where we might not be able to run the school as normal for all year groups. We need to make sure we have enough staff to manage the school safely. **We will let you know via text by 7:45am. In any scenario as previously advised we will send home details about how students can access learning via google classrooms or equivalent.**

Yours faithfully,



O de Botton
Headteacher

More information on vulnerable groups

Note: there are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you are in this category, next week the NHS in England will directly contact you with advice on the more stringent measures you should take in order to keep yourself and others safe. For now, you should rigorously follow the social distancing advice in full, outlined in the link above.

People falling into this group are those who may be at particular risk due to complex health problems such as:

- *People who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication*
- *People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radiotherapy*
- *People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment*
- *People with severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)*
- *People with severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)*