

The Elton High School

Quality • Care • Integrity



Headteacher: Mr J C Wilton MA (Hons.)

16 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

The national situation regarding the coronavirus pandemic is obviously changing on a daily basis and I would like to provide an update from a school perspective.

I would like to begin by taking this opportunity to thank parents and carers for your sensible, measured responses which have ensured that there has been minimum fuss and we have been able to carry on with our daily school routines in the usual manner. This is obviously a serious situation with the whole country (and the wider world) taking actions to deal with the pandemic, but it is worth reminding students that the symptoms of the illness are relatively mild and it does not pose any kind of serious risk for young people. However, it is a new illness and we need to deal with it in a way that fits with the national guidance. The main school updates are highlighted in the list below:

Daily routine

At present school continues to operate as normal. We have suspended our Art to Heart visits to local care homes but, aside from that, everything carries on in the usual manner. I am leading assemblies to all year groups during this week to reinforce the main facts about the virus and to remind the students about how they should act so as to minimise their own personal risk – the most obvious point being the proper, regular washing of hands. We have increased the hours of cleaning across the school and will now have a member of staff working throughout the school day to keep the key areas of the building as clean as possible.

Student Illness

The updated guidance emphasises that children should not attend school if they are showing any symptoms of the virus – the main symptoms being regular, continuous coughing and/or high temperature. If any students start to develop these symptoms during the school day, then parents/family will be contacted and we will ask that they are collected from school at the earliest opportunity.

School Trips and Events

We have taken the decision to cancel this Thursday's Year 8 Parents' Evening so as to reduce the possibility of infected individuals spreading the virus. The Parents' Evening has now been rescheduled for Thursday 2 July 2020 and we will be in touch nearer that time about arrangements for the event.

Based on the latest government guidance, we are left with no option but to cancel the forthcoming Geography trip to Iceland. We are really sorry about this cancellation and realise that it will leave many of the students feeling disheartened and upset. We will do all that we can to ensure that full compensation is provided to parents and will be aiming to hold the trip again in the future.

The Elton High School

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There is also a History trip to London scheduled for weekend of 27th-29th March. At present, the trip is still going ahead but the situation is changing on a day to day basis and the students need to be prepared for a possible cancellation. As always, we will keep parents updated as much as possible and make a final decision based on the wellbeing and safety of the children.

School Closure

At present the government has no immediate plans to close schools. Their view is that children are least affected by the virus and that by sending children home there will be greater strain on families and less people available to work in healthcare establishments. However, even if schools are directed to stay open we have to consider the prospect that if staff absence increases to particularly high levels we will not be able to run our normal timetable effectively. In that situation our priority will be to keep Year 10 and Year 11 students in school and cancel the timetable for Key Stage 3 students. This is obviously a last resort and at present we are hopeful that it will not happen.

Aside from our own staffing situation, if the government stance changes and schools are closed, we have made necessary preparations to deal with this.

Firstly, we have reminded students that it will not be an extended holiday and that they are expected to do work at home. Staff will be setting work and checking the work on a daily basis, with activities being done through Seneca Learning and GoogleClassroom. All the students have login details for these programmes and they have all been reminded about how to use these systems. Further to this, paper resources have been prepared by many departments and they will be taken by the students if we do close the building.

Secondly, while the building would be closed, staff remain at work and can be accessible by email and, where necessary, by phone. It is important that the students realise they must continue to work and they will be being checked on a daily basis. For our Year 11 students, it will be vital that revision activities are being completed throughout each school day and they work as productively as possible with the exams being only a few weeks away.

I do hope that this clarifies our school position and our readiness to deal with this matter. As mentioned previously, we really do appreciate your support in dealing with this in a sensible, measured manner.

As always, please contact me directly if you have any questions about any of this information or indeed about any other school matters - my address is wiltonj@eltonhigh.bury.sch.uk

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Wilton
Headteacher