



Thursday 12th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: COVID-19 planning

I want to share with you The Emmbrook's contingency planning in response to COVID-19. Today the Government updated its advice to delay the spread of the virus. They now advise the following:

Stay at home for 7 days if you have either:

- a high temperature
- a new continuous cough

This will help to protect others in your community while you are infectious.

These symptoms do not necessarily mean an individual has COVID-19. The symptoms are also similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu. Our advice is that if you are worried about your symptoms or those of your son or daughter; please call NHS 111 for advice and guidance. The Emmbrook follows the advice provided [here](#) by Public Health England and the Department of Education in every respect. This means as a school we have a safety plan, which includes the following.

Day to day safe practice

All staff and students are frequently reminded to wash their hands regularly (using soap and water or alcohol sanitiser); cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue; avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. We have used DfE materials [here](#) to remind students of good hygiene and encouraged hand washing:

- a. before leaving home
- b. on arrival at school
- c. after using the toilet
- d. after sporting activities
- e. before eating any food, including snacks

Soap dispensers are refilled regularly and monitored during the day to ensure that there is always a plentiful supply. During science lessons, teachers are taking the opportunity to educate students about the viruses and the prevention of their spread.

All cleaning protocols are completed under the advice of Public Health England.

The school has a well-understood "safe-plan" protocol that would be used if it were to be the case that a student or member of staff displays symptoms whilst at school.

From the news that the Government are planning for a range of future scenarios, one of which includes the possibility of a temporary school closure. Whilst I sincerely hope this will not be the case we have the following plans in place.



Day to day communication

We have remote access to our IT systems and will email parents and carers to keep you updated. In addition, the website will provide up to date information. As we have very active parental engagement with our Facebook and Twitter accounts, these would be used to alert you to decisions, with more detailed information being sent via email.

Remote learning

Given this critical time of the school year and especially in respect to examination classes, if the school were required to close we have plans to allow students to continue to learn at home. Whilst there is no substitute for being in a classroom with a teacher, we will set work electronically through [Show My Homework](#) and email. These tasks may then direct students to further online resources, including our [SharePoint](#) site and other third party web-based services that we use routinely (e.g. Doodle, MathsWatch, Tassomai). Should you require any support with access then please contact ipanesar@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk. In addition in the student section of the website there are direct links to some of our online educational sites.

Educational trips and visits

As a school, we will follow all Foreign Office (FCO) and DFE advice. This will ensure that insurances are valid and refunds are payable when necessary. Current guidance advises that foreign travel should go ahead as planned if it is not to a category one or two country, please see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>.

Public examinations

The most current update from OFQUAL is clear that the exam season remains secure and we, therefore, continue to prepare our students for their GCSEs and A levels as normal.

Staff absence

It is possible that for a period of time, we will be open but a higher than normal number of staff may be absent. Whilst the Government are "relaxing" the law regarding maximum class size, in reality, this has no practical meaning for secondary schools. Rooms have a maximum capacity and students are taught by subject specialists. If high staff absence does become the case, we will do everything we can to remain open, we will prioritise examination classes and may have to open partially for other year groups. However, this would always be a last resort.

Well being

As Headteacher, I am very conscious that students and indeed anyone can become very worried about COVID- 19. Current advice is clear that students should attend school and there is no requirement to self-isolate unless under the conditions set out by Public Health England. Therefore, students should attend school as normal.

Recognising that COVID-19 is subject to rapid change, I highlight Government websites, which offer clear facts and advice:

www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public

The Government Coronavirus Action Plan; a guide to what you can expect across the UK – www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan



I do hope that you find it helpful that we share our preparation in response to COVID-19. Should you have any comments regarding this matter, then please do contact me directly (nmcsweeney@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk).

Best wishes,

Nick McSweeney
Headteacher