



Bexley Grammar School
Danson Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BL
A Specialist Language College
and IB World School
Tel: 020 8304 8538

18th March 2020

Coronavirus - update

Dear Parents/Carers,

Urgent information:

Early closure for all students at 2:15pm on Thursday (tomorrow) and Friday (19-20 March)

Staff have been working hard, alongside teaching your children and covering for absent colleagues, implementing our emergency contingency plans in preparation for partial or full school closure should this be necessary. I would like to recognise our staff for their resilience and professionalism in the face of uncertainty and constant change. They are managing your children's expectations and concerns with patience and calm.

Protecting your children means that staff, too, must follow self-isolation guidelines based on conditions in their households. Whereas a member of staff might normally be off school for a day or two with a cold, each such staff member could now be off school for two weeks, in some cases because of the illness of a family member rather than their own. It seems that partial closures will be inevitable in the coming days unless we are very fortunate. However, the school will remain open as long as we are able to staff all or part of it safely or until such time that the Government closes all schools.

We are modelling such possibilities and, importantly, we are developing a coherent school strategy for providing remote learning through Google Classroom, as I mentioned yesterday. This is a time-consuming process if the learning offered is to be useful, realistic and cater for families in a range of circumstances in terms of computer resources and online access. It is simply not practical to follow the school timetable remotely. In order to free up a little time for teachers to plan this learning, I am **implementing early closures (50 minutes) on Thursday (19) and Friday (20) this week. On these two days, we will dismiss all students after lunch at 2:15pm.**

I apologise for any inconvenience this may cause you; **the intention is to minimise disruption in the longer term by small disruptions now.**

Please continue to monitor ParentPay emails and the school website regularly for any urgent announcements.

Thank you for your support.

Best wishes,



Steve Elphick
Headteacher

Reminders/Current Advice:

If your child, or anyone in your family, shows symptoms, specifically **either a continuous cough or a high temperature (or both)** - then your family must self-isolate for **fourteen** days to protect others. Please see this link for guidance on isolation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

In particular, please read the section near the end of the guidance entitled '**Ending self-isolation and household-isolation**', over which there has been some confusion (see extract below). 14 days isolation is for those who do not develop symptoms in a family. If a family member has been ill but is better after 7 days, he/she can return to school/work :

Ending self-isolation and household-isolation

If you have been symptomatic, then you may end your self-isolation after 7 days. The 7-day period starts from the day when you first became ill.

If living with others, then all household members who remain well may end household-isolation after 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day illness began in the first person to become ill. Fourteen days is the incubation period for coronavirus; people who remain well after 14 days are unlikely to be infectious.

After 7 days, if the first person to become ill feels better and no longer has a high temperature, they can return to their normal routine. If any other family members become unwell during the 14-day household-isolation period, they should follow the same advice - that is, after 7 days of their symptoms starting, if they feel better and no longer have a high temperature, they can also return to their normal routine.

Should a household member develop coronavirus symptoms late in the 14-day household-isolation period (for example, on day 13 or day 14) the isolation period does not need to be extended, but the person with the new symptoms has to stay at home for 7 days.

Please continue to report any absence in the usual way by contacting the Attendance Office.

Public examination schedules for GCSE and IB remain in place and ensuring that Year 11 and Year 13 complete these examinations in a safe environment remains a top priority in our contingency plans.