

Please note: Email response needed if your son/daughter cannot access Schoology from home if school has to close.

16th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: School update on COVID-19 and plans for students if school has to close

We are writing to update you regarding the advice that we have been given by the Department for Education and Public Health England regarding COVID-19. This is a constantly changing picture and we are conscious that parents and carers will be concerned to know what the school is doing.

Self-isolation and Government advice

As you are aware the current government advice is for schools to remain open. The Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty stated ‘...there is no scientific evidence yet for closing schools.’ He followed this by saying that although young people do get infected, ‘...they seem to have a much milder disease.’ We currently have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst pupils, staff or parents so Heathside School remains open as normal for all pupils. We will inform you if this situation changes. The advice is that anyone with a new persistent cough or high temperature to self-isolate for seven days.

Protecting and supporting pupils and staff

We would like to stress that we are being extra vigilant and asking pupils and staff to take extra precautions, which includes regularly washing hands and following the *Catch it, Bin it, Kill it* advice when sneezing or coughing. As you would expect we already promote these practices at school and we would appreciate your support in continuing to encourage the same at home.

Should you be worried about your symptoms or those of your child, please call NHS 111. The advice is not to go directly to your GP or other healthcare environments. Please see further information on the [Public Health England \(PHE\)](#) and the [National Health Service \(NHS\)](#) websites.

Remote learning and examinations

The health and well-being of our students is our first concern but, we also wish to reassure you that we are planning what we will do in the event of the Government closing schools. Our plans will include students being set work on Schoology, according to their normal daily timetable. We will try to ensure that no student is disadvantaged by this and would ask that, if any student **cannot** access Schoology, then **parents should email Mrs Parrish (jparrish@heathside.surrey.sch.uk) as soon as possible**, with the student’s full name, year group and tutor group, such that we can plan to send work packs home with these students if the school closes. Please try to respond to the above email address by return if a work pack will be needed, but certainly no later than **Wednesday 18th March 2020**.

There is currently no guidance on public examinations, other than from [Ofqual](#) stating that schools should continue to prepare students as normal and this is a situation which we are monitoring closely.

Events, trips and fixtures

We will continue to run extra-curricular activities and intervention and have kept the Year 12 Parents' Evening booking open. However all other trips and fixtures will not be running.

If you or members of your household have travelled to any of the affected countries or intend to go on a trip or holiday please follow the Government's [travel advice](#) to protect both yourself and others.

As a school we take our duty of care extremely seriously and we will keep you updated on any further developments as they arise via Schoolcomms and the website. We ask at this time that you please check the website carefully before calling the school with queries, and avoid coming into the school unless absolutely necessary. Please rest assured that we will share updates with you as we receive them

We would like to thank you for your on-going support to date and are extremely proud of the mature and calm manner with which all of our students and staff have approached the situation so far.

Best wishes



Ms Dohel
Head of School



Mrs Cullum
Executive Principal.