



16th March 2020

Dear Families,

Coronavirus/ COVID-19 Update – Sydenham School

I am sure that you are all following the news closely and that you are aware of the new Coronavirus advice that came out today from Public Health England (PHE).

Following updated government guidance, it is essential that if any students or staff members develop the following specific symptoms, they stay at home:

- a high temperature
- a new continuous cough.

Do not go (or take your child) to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home. Please follow the guidance at this link for details of how long to stay at home for and check for regular updates.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

Please let the school know as soon as possible if your child is unwell.

In line with current Public Health England advice, if anyone becomes ill with a fever or cough symptoms during the school day they will be sent home. **Please make sure that the school has up-to-date contact details for you and that you keep your phone close to hand so that we can get in touch with you if necessary. This is an important expectation that we have of all parents and carers at this time.**

At the time of writing, Sydenham School does not have any confirmed COVID-19 cases within the school community.

We understand that families are concerned about the risk of their child catching the Coronavirus and that some may want to keep their children at home even though they are not required to do so according to the advice from the government. However, all students who are well enough to come to school and not showing the symptoms described above, should attend school as normal.

We continue to follow the advice of the Department for Education and Public Health England in school. Please remind your child of the importance of washing their hands properly and regularly. We are taking extra care with cleaning; there are increased full time cleaners on site during the school day ensuring that surfaces, door handles etc are kept clean. We will continue to follow advice and we will keep you informed of the ever-changing situation and what the school is doing in response to it.



The school has taken the decision to postpone all visits during the school day and in the evenings as well as to postpone the Spring Concert. After school extra-curricular activities have also been cancelled for this week. This is to reduce the risk to the school community and so that staff capacity can be prioritised for the day to day running of lessons during school hours.

As I am sure you will appreciate, staff absence is higher than usual due to several members of staff self-isolating. I am sure you will share our gratitude to staff who are continuing to work and keep the school running as usual in these exceptional circumstances.

It is essential that you check all communication from the school on a regular basis, including on the school website. You should make contingency plans with your child in case you are informed that the school needs to close at short notice; this should include plans for what would happen if this decision was made during the school day. Please ensure that your child is well briefed on this plan.

Finally, staff have been working exceptionally hard behind the scenes to ensure that plans are in place for the continuation of learning and provision of free school meals in the event of a school closure.

Please notify the school if your child does not have access to the internet at home. We are reissuing student log-ins on Tuesday 17th March to ensure that all students can access any relevant school systems from home. Please ensure your child has checked that they can log in when they get home after school on Tuesday 17th March.

Please make sure you check the NHS and government websites daily:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19>

I realise that this is a very concerning time for all of us. Please rest assured that the safety of the school community remains our priority. We will keep you updated with any new information.

Yours sincerely

Gloria Lowe
Headteacher