

Tuesday 17 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS UP-DATE AS AT 12 NOON ON 17.3.20**

***What has been happening in school over the past 24 hours?*** We have a considerable number of staff and pupils who are in the 14 day isolation category. We are managing to cover lessons every day at the moment but pupils may not be with staff they know and I appreciate this is not ideal for our pupils.

***What do we need to do as a school to keep students and staff safe and to protect the wider community?*** I am sorry for the disruption this may cause you but we are going to have to stop delivering lessons in family homes and social venues such as cafés, libraries and open areas in community centres. This means we are having to go for a partial closure that will affect a small number of pupils from 18.3.20.

If your son or daughter has lessons in the home or in an off-site venue then their key worker will be ringing you through the day tomorrow to tell you whether we are able to protect your son or daughter's face to face teaching (by using an alternative venue) or if we will be delivering work to the home in work packs or via an e-learning method. We have tried where possible to protect pupils who are in their final year. Any protected sessions will re-commence from 19.3.20 if we have been able to find alternative teaching spaces.

It is my sincere wish that we can keep the school open as far as possible. However, as I said in my letter yesterday there may come a tipping point if we have further staff absence. If staff display symptoms they have no choice but to follow the Government guidance. If we have insufficient staff to keep the site safe then it may necessary for more of the school to close. If we do have to do this then we have plans for helping to get work to pupils. This information is on our website [www.danesgatecommunity.org.uk](http://www.danesgatecommunity.org.uk).

***What calendared events are cancelled?*** I am sorry to report that the Art Exhibition (due to be on 2.4.20 to 23.4.20 at West Offices) will be postponed to the summer term. I would also confirm that the Danesgate review day due to run on 25.3.20 (for pupils based on Fulford Cross site) is cancelled. Instead, keyworkers will hold phone meetings with parents and carers to go through end of term reports.

***What is the current Government advice telling us to do?*** The latest health information is that if anyone or any member of their household, has symptoms of the coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, the government advice is to stay at home, self-isolate and not leave the house for fourteen days from when the symptoms started. This action is crucial in helping to protect others in the community from potential infection. The symptoms are:

- A new continuous cough
- A high temperature (above 37.8)

If children, young people or staff display any of these symptoms then they should not attend school and should stay at home so that we can support efforts to limit the further spread of the virus. Should these symptoms develop during the school day then those involved will be sent home.

The government advice is also to stay at least two metres (about three steps) away from other people whenever possible and stay away from vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as much as possible. And you should of course continue to wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water.

***When will we know more about what is happening in schools?*** There may be a further briefing for schools today (17.3.20) but this information in this letter is correct up to midnight on 16.3.20. We receive regular updates from the DfE and Public Health England. There is already a live link to these up-dates on the school's website.

I am hoping we will not be in this situation but if we are I want to reassure everyone that we have contingency plans and will be in touch if these are needed. Clearly, if the situation worsens then the calendared events described in this letter will not go ahead. I will do my very best to keep in touch with everyone via the school's web-site, letters and phone calls home.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Head', written in a cursive style.

Patricia Head (Mrs)  
Headteacher

[www.danesgatecommunity.org.uk](http://www.danesgatecommunity.org.uk)