

16th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds everyone well. I have put some important information regarding Covid-19 (coronavirus) below but also have some positive news and calendar items to share with you.

New Headteacher. I am delighted to confirm that the Governors have appointed Mark Richardson as Danesgate's new headteacher. Mark was Head of Modern Foreign Languages Fulford School some years ago but has more recently been Deputy Headteacher of Hall Cliffe School in Wakefield. I do not know Mark's exact start date as yet as he has a notice period to work through in his current school. However, the Danesgate governors are meeting this week to finalise plans for how the school will be managed in the interim. I will write out to you with more information on this next week.

Gareth Morton, Deputy Headteacher, has been appointed to the post of Headteacher at The Rubicon in Selby. I am delighted for Gareth even though I know he will be very much missed here. This is super next step for Gareth though and I wish him every success in his new school.

Annual Art exhibition. This is a fantastic annual event. I am giving the details here but appreciate things will be affected by the escalating coronavirus situation. The exhibition will run from 2.4.20 to 23.4.20. We are delighted to be able to use the City of York Council West Offices as a venue (just opposite the Cedar Court Grand Hotel). The exhibition will show the best of the year's work from Primary up to GCSE groups. It will be open all over the Easter holiday so please do drop in when you can to see the work.

End of term review events. We always have an end of term event when you can come through the day at any time to meet with your son or daughter's key worker and go through the end of term report. The 25th March is the review day on Danesgate's Fulford campus and keyworkers will be in touch with parents and carers to agree convenient meeting times or phone calls for anyone not wishing to involve themselves in public events at the present time.

Covid 19 (Coronavirus). *There may be a further briefing for schools today (16.3.20) but this information is correct up to midnight on 15.3.20.*

Following on from the Prime Minister's recent guidance I would like to update you on our current planning as a school around the spread of Coronavirus. 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.

If anyone has symptoms of the coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, the government advice is to stay at home and not leave the house for seven days from when the symptoms started. This action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious. The symptoms are said to be:

- A new continuous cough
- A fever (temperature over 37.8c)

If your son or daughter displays any of these symptoms please follow this guidance and keep your child at home so that we can work together to try to stem any further spread of the virus. If your child does display these symptoms we would be grateful if you could let us know as soon as possible so that we can be certain that we can take appropriate advice.

The government advice is to stay at least two metres (about three steps) away from other people in your home 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.

In school we are expecting pupils and staff to wash hands regularly and use hand sanitiser where appropriate. Please support us in this by telling your son or daughter that we need to do this to help the wider community.

It is my sincere wish that we can keep open and we will try to do this even with potential staff absences. However, there may come a tipping point if we have high staff absence. If staff display symptoms they will have no choice but to follow the Government guidance. This means they would have to self-isolate for 7 days to see if their symptoms develop. If a lot of staff are in this position then we would have to consider whether we have sufficient staff to keep the site safe. If we have insufficient staff to do this then it may necessary for school to close. This is not a decision that we would take lightly but we do know that you share our view that 'keeping children safe' is the priority. It may be that even with reduced staffing we can stay open for primary aged pupils and for pupils sitting their GCSEs. We are also working on ways we can get school work to pupils if we do have to close.

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 faithfully



Patricia Head (Mrs)
Headteacher

www.danegatecommunity.org.uk