

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus Update

You will all be aware of the escalation in the coronavirus pandemic over the last few days. This is clearly worrying and everyone including parents, staff and pupils will understandably be concerned.

Please be assured that we will continue to follow the detailed advice received from the Department for Education and Public Health England and the risk to children and young people remains very low.

In order to reduce risks, we have told pupils that they must:

1. Wash their hands regularly and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds. They must now do this:
 - Just before setting off from home.
 - As soon as possible on arrival to school.
 - Before eating.
 - Immediately when they arrive home.
2. Not touch their face, particularly around the mouth, nose or eyes.
3. Report directly to Reception if they exhibit a high temperature and/or a new and persistent cough in school. Pupils will then be placed in isolation until parents can collect them.

If your child is showing signs of illness, specifically a **high temperature** and/or a **new, continuous cough**, then the advice is to stay at home and self-isolate for 7 days

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

If you have, or think you might have the Covid-19 virus, please go to <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>.

Current guidance for those needing to self-isolate can be found at

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>

You should:

- Try to keep at least 2 metres (3 steps) from other people in your home, particularly older people or those with long-term health conditions.
- Ask friends and family and delivery services to deliver things like food shopping and medicines – but avoid contact with them.
- Sleep alone if possible.
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Try to stay away from older people and those with long-term health conditions.
- Drink plenty of water and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, to help with your symptoms.
- *Please feel free to send your children to school with their own supply of hand sanitiser*

Please remember, for self-isolation, you should not leave the house for the entire 7 day period.

In addition to the guidance, we have decided to change our normal patterns of working to

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promote social distancing and hygiene. I believe that these are sensible and proportionate precautions to ensure that we have done everything possible to protect our pupils, their families and staff. These changes are now in place and will remain so until further notice. These include -

1. Class teachers and tutors have carefully explained how pupils can keep themselves safe, so please reinforce this at home. You can, if in doubt, use the following information: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51711227>.
2. There will be no assemblies in school. We will now communicate information to pupils through their subject teacher or tutor instead.
3. There will be no staff meetings or briefings in school and communication with staff will now be through email.
4. There will be no parents' evenings or meetings with parents. You will however receive progress reports as normal. We ask that you do not visit the school unless it is simply unavoidable.
5. Our school is already cleaned to a high standard, but we will be introducing additional deep cleaning wherever possible, including door handles, keyboards, mice and hard surfaces.
6. Lunchtime arrangements will be adjusted to avoid really large groups of pupils being in close proximity.
7. Lessons, clubs and extra learning opportunities for exam classes will continue as normal.
8. All sports fixtures for pupils are cancelled.
9. For the foreseeable future, school trips are to be cancelled. There may be exceptions, but they will be decided upon on an individual basis, having assessed their potential for increasing risk.
10. At this point, all foreign trips are cancelled between now and the end of the school year. If this changes we will let you know. Clearly there are trips that have been fully or partially paid for already. If this is the case we will communicate arrangements for refunds once we are able to. For now, thank you for your patience in this.

Should the school need to shut fully or partially

It is possible that the school may need to close over the coming weeks, either partially or fully. If this is needed, we will let you know through our normal communication systems, including text, email and on our website. In the event of a partial closure, we will prioritise continuing lessons for pupils in Years 13 & 11. We will also set detailed work for pupils who are told not to attend school. Details of how this will be done are being communicated to pupils over the course of this week. Instructions for pupils and for you will be published should the school close. This work will be online, but we will provide hard copies for pupils without internet access.

Examination Boards are advising that GCSEs and A Levels will continue as normal, and it is important that pupils are reassured about this. If the situation were to change, Examination Boards would ensure that pupils are not adversely affected. For example, alternative admission arrangements would be put in place, so that their prospects for a university or sixth form place would not be jeopardised.

If pupils need to self-isolate, please call the school to let us know, and we will authorise absence for the required number of days. If their condition then improves, pupils can return to school at the end

of their isolation period. If their condition worsens, you should contact 111 for further advice and then let us know when convenient.

Please be assured that we will continue to do everything we can to ensure that risks are minimised. Whilst the situation is obviously concerning, I hope that you are reassured by our actions. As a school and a community we are very good at looking after each other and I am sure that this will continue in these difficult times. We will update you of any further changes by letter, email and through our website.

This email is sent using our automated system which is not monitored, so any queries should be directed to office@reephamhigh.com or office@reephamcollege.com

Please understand that we are taking a much larger than normal number of calls, and we will endeavour to respond to you as soon as we can.

Yours sincerely

Tim Gibbs
Headteacher

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