

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus update, Tuesday 17 March – partial school closure from tomorrow, Wednesday 18 March

There were two announcements from the Government last night that are having a significant impact on our ability to run the school. These were:

1. The instruction that people should now self-isolate for 14 days if **any** member of their household is displaying symptoms of the Coronavirus and
2. The instruction that people with specific underlying health conditions that make them more vulnerable to infection, should 'social-distance' themselves, including not going to work, for the foreseeable future.

The combination of these two additional criteria has led to a dramatic increase in the number of staff that are not able to come to work for the next two weeks and beyond. These staff are additional to the number of staff that are currently absent from work due to dependency or illness that is not Coronavirus-related. As of typing this message, we know of 28 members of staff that will definitely not be in work tomorrow and, clearly, that number could rise overnight. As a result, **we have decided that Year 10 students and Year 12 students will not come to school tomorrow, Wednesday 18 March and Thursday 19 March and Friday the 20th of March** (the exception to this is any Year 10 students that are involved in the 'IndepenDance' event – they should come to school for their 'IndepenDance' activities on Wednesday as the event cannot happen without them; they would then be off school on Thursday and Friday). This helps us with staffing at the school because those teachers that would be teaching Year 10 and 12 could then be asked to cover lessons for the teachers that are absent from school.

Students in Years 7,8,9,11 and 13 should come to school as normal on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (unless they meet the criteria for self-isolating or are otherwise ill). It is very likely that we will need to continue with partial closure beyond this week, but with different year group(s) off school at any one time. This is because many of the staff that are absent will not be back in school for 2 weeks or more.

On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday this week, Year 10 students are expected to **work from home** and do work that has been set on Doodle and Year 12 students are expected to complete work set through Doodle or by whatever other means departments use to set work for them. Should Year 12 students wish to, they can come in to use the House for independent learning.

For information, there are approximately 150 students currently off school and self-isolating.

Also in line with announcements from Government late yesterday afternoon, **here is some advice that we have given to Hinchingsbrooke staff today, that is in line with the key principle that all non-essential activity should cease.** In our case, **essential** means those activities that happen during the school day, 8.45am to 3.30pm – in the main, clearly, this is the lessons.

- All after-school and evening activities will cease immediately – this includes after school revision classes, 'Nightclub', and sports, drama and musical activities
- There will be no 'Easter School'
- No trips (including Duke of Edinburgh scheme trips) until further notice
- No assemblies until further notice
- No staff on external courses until further notice

- HBK Leisure activities will cease
- No non-essential meetings between staff
- When on duty, staff are asked to encourage students to be outside (unless it is raining). This includes encouraging students to leave the Food Court and PAC as soon as possible and eat outside.

We are sorry to take this action but we hope you will understand it is in the interests of safety. This is a constantly-changing situation; we intend to send a Parentmail every day, updating you and we will put the same message out on our Twitter account (@HBK_School) and on the school website; please look out for it.

If you are affected adversely by these arrangements, please email covid-19@hinchbk.cambs.sch.uk.

Thank you very much for your understanding and your support.

Kind regards

Mark Patterson

Principal