



16 March 2020

Dear Parent,

COVID-19 Update

Further to my letter of 2 March 2020, to all parents, I wish to update you on the School's current practices and arrangements relating to COVID-19.

At present there has been no official communication to schools with regard to potential closure as a measure in addressing COVID-19. In addition as of Thursday last week the SQA officially stated that the exam diet was still scheduled to begin on 27 April. In turn, for the High School we remain open at present and continue to deliver the curriculum and to also support our SQA exam candidates. Should we receive any further official advice we would be in contact with you immediately.

With regard to guidance from Health Protection Scotland (NHS) to schools and educational settings, this has been updated today, 16 March, with no change to the original advice other than the prohibiting of overseas school trips until further notice and advice on risk assessment for UK based trips.

Whilst there has been no further official guidance to schools regarding arrangements, we have taken the following steps over the past weeks:

GENERAL MATTERS

- Pupils and staff are regularly reminded to wash their hands with soap and water on a regular basis throughout the day. Tissues should be used for sneezing and coughing and disposed of immediately. If no tissue the individual should use the crook of their elbow to sneeze or cover a cough. This is in line with the guidance from Health Protection Scotland.
- The wiping down to sanitise computing keyboards and shared musical instruments, plus entry keypads, which is normal cleaning practice in the school, has been increased over the past weeks. Equipment used in Computing and Music is sanitised prior to each lesson.
- All aspects of regular daily cleaning in the school have been enhanced.
- Senior Leaders and the Health and Safety team meet daily to review actions.
- At this time we would ask that only essential parental visits and meetings take place.





MEDICAL

- **School Nurse:** Should a pupil or member of staff present with any of the following symptoms they will be isolated following HPS guidance and for pupils parents informed: High temperature of 37.8°C or higher; persistent dry cough; breathlessness; muscular aches or mix of symptoms. We would also ask that should your child exhibit any of these symptoms before leaving home that you keep them at home and seek advice.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

- As we informed pupils this morning, we have decided where practicable to reduce the level of social interaction across the school day by suspending morning assembly from Tuesday 17 March until the end of term at both schools.
- All after-school games and activities at the Senior School have been cancelled and in addition there will be no inter-school sporting or non-sporting fixtures or activities (including DofE training and expeditions), nor any school trips before the start of the summer term.
- Junior School after-school clubs and Out of School Care will continue to operate as normal.
- The **Annual Parent Association** meeting scheduled for this Wednesday 18 March is now cancelled.
- In the Senior School we have considered if the timetable could function with teachers moving only, however with mixed class sets for subjects across the curriculum, as well as specialist teaching equipment and resources, this is not proving workable at present.
- Both the Junior School and Senior School Concerts scheduled for later this term have been cancelled.

FUTURE PLANS

- Should the School be required to close to pupils for an extended period of time, contingency measures are in place to maintain teaching and learning online. We have also been providing further training to staff to support.
- Junior School parents will be familiar with use of the SeeSaw app and the Junior School will make increased use in the event of closure.
- For the Senior School, pupils should already be aware of how to access online departmental resources to support their learning. Teaching staff are reminding pupils of such provision this week.
- Without official Health Protection Scotland or Scottish Government advice we are not in the position to make a decision to either close the School or to reduce the school population by requesting only certain year groups attend school. That may of course change in the coming days.



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I am aware of the understandable concerns of many parents at this time and we have been in direct communication with some. Where a family have decided at present to keep their child at home rather than send them to school, unless of course the child is ill, Junior School families should access See-Saw whereas Senior School pupils should access the online departmental resources to help with revision or learning.

As we are all aware, we are in a constantly changing and evolving situation and I would ask you to continue to work with us as we seek to address matters and whilst we await further official advice.

I will keep you updated regularly regarding our current arrangements or should we receive any further official guidance. We remain in contact with the Scottish Council for Independent Schools and closely monitor daily the Health Protection Scotland and Scottish Government information.

Yours sincerely,