



17th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Covid-19 Update

Planning within school is continuing to support our response to the Covid-19 outbreak and the advice being issued by the Government. We are trying hard to keep our responses proportional and measured whilst at the same time working to protect our school community as well as following government advice.

As expected, the further self-isolation measures announced yesterday have had an impact on staffing levels as well as student attendance. We are working on a daily basis to manage and plan our staffing and we are able to maintain a full timetable tomorrow. It will be necessary to keep this under review and we will update you further as things develop. We also have a number of students self-isolating due to having, or a member of their household having, symptoms outlined in the Government guidelines. Whilst all the staff will do their very best to support all of our students in their learning, we have to be realistic and honest with you about the current capacity we have within school to be able to provide individualised work, with the marking and feedback associated with this. To enable students self-isolating to be able to progress their learning, independent study tasks will be set via Microsoft Teams. All students have been shown how to access Teams but if they need any support please ask them to email secretary@bentonpark.net

Following yesterday's guidance we have decided to take additional steps within school to protect our students and staff by reducing any aspect of non-essential contact between our students, staff and parents. With this in mind, we are introducing the following additional measures:

- Year 11 Parents' Evening scheduled for 25th March will be cancelled. Alternative arrangements will be made to provide important feedback to our students ahead of the exam season and further details of this will follow.
- Any face-to-face contact with parents and/or outside agencies will be routinely cancelled. Should we feel it is essential to arrange a face-to-face meeting we will discuss this with the parties concerned and take appropriate measures.
- All full year group assemblies will be cancelled for the time being. We understand that students have to be together at lunchtime and break times but we can manage this in such a way to limit proximity with each other as much as we can. We feel that assemblies all together in the Hall are contact which is not entirely necessary at this time.

Headteacher: Miss D Martin

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BENTON PARK SCHOOL

'Creating a climate for great learning, success and opportunity'

- All Extra-Curricular clubs will be cancelled until Easter with the exception of intervention for Year 11 and 13 students. This is again to limit contact and also to enable us to manage staffing within school and allow our staff to focus on the day to day essential operations.
- A trip due to go to London next week has been postponed until further notice and all other non-essential visits are under review and will be cancelled wherever possible. For the time being, we are not planning any other additional visits.

We recognise that this is a stressful time for all concerned, in particular those students in Years 11 and 13 due to sit examinations this summer. Current guidance is to continue to prepare as normal for these exams and we would like to reassure these students that we will do all we can to prioritise their learning and support them to achieve the outcomes they have worked hard to achieve. For any students who are particularly struggling during this period, please encourage them to speak to a member of our pastoral or safeguarding teams who will be happy to provide support. A range of additional support resources can also be found on the safeguarding page of our website <http://www.bentonpark.org.uk/safeguarding/68055.html>

Please continue to follow the Public Health England and NHS guidance in relation to the symptoms and actions needed for the Coronavirus. In addition, we will continue to encourage students around school to take all necessary measures to keep themselves safe.

With daily updates from the Government, we can expect further changes as we move through the week and our staffing changes could mean we have to make some further difficult decisions. Please be assured that staff are currently busy contingency planning to ensure that we can support all of our students throughout this difficult period.

These are unprecedented times and I am grateful to all members of our school community for your continued support of the school.

Yours sincerely

Delia Martin
Headteacher

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