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Devizes School
 & Sixth Form College

Raising aspirations, building futures

11th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Advice on Coronavirus/Covid 19

As you are aware both locally and nationally, we are facing a heightened risk of the novel Coronavirus, (Covid 19), being the source of widespread illness and disruption to the normal daily life of us all including the parents/ carers and students of Devizes School.

Quite rightly this has caused a number of parents to ask what we are doing to contain the spread in our school and what other advice we can offer, and this letter is an attempt to support those questions wherever we can but we recognise that even at the point of writing this is a fast-moving situation and subject to change.

Will the school be closing?

We have received the following update from the DfE which states that:

“...We would like to remind colleagues in schools that no school should close in response to a suspected (or confirmed) COVID-19 case unless directed to do so by Public Health England (PHE). The risk assessments carried out by PHE are very thorough and their team will also communicate with all people who need to self-isolate or be tested following a case being confirmed...”

So, to be clear the school will only close as a result of direct contact with PHE England, the local authority and the Trust leadership including the CEO of the Trust, Dr Nicholas Capstick O.B.E.

- In the unlikely event of our school needing to partially close we are currently advancing our own plans due to the spread of the virus. A partial shutdown may occur if a number of staff members were forced to either self-isolate or fell ill. In such cases the School would prioritise the teaching of the examination groups in Years 11 and 13.
- If a full shut down were to occur, the School is working on plans to carry on teaching via its VLE (Show My Homework, Tassomai, Hegarty Maths, Corbett M@ths, Vocab Express). In the meantime, please ensure that your son or daughter has checked that they are able to log in to Show My Homework at home. If your child has problems logging in at home, then they should make their tutor aware as soon as possible so that the problems can be rectified for them.)

In addition, the Department for Education (DfE) has launched a coronavirus (COVID-19) advice service for the education sector, including staff, parents, carers and young people. The relevant details are detailed below:

Department for Education Coronavirus helpline

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

Some students are maybe looking forward to upcoming trips, for example the Battlefields Trip to Belgium and France, and others within the UK. We have been advised that, under government guidance in place at the time of writing, we can continue to prepare for school trips to go ahead. However, we shall continue to monitor the daily advice being provided to schools by PHE, and any travel advice issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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As a reminder, the helpful links for parents/carers are set out below:

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

NHS111 Online <https://111.nhs.uk/>

PHE Public Info <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Good hygiene is the best prevention and there are some simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by washing your hands regularly and thoroughly and if you cough, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.

Please can I remind all parents and carers that they should immediately contact the School if they have travelled to an infected area, or if they have come into contact with someone who has and who is being tested for Covid-19 and is in self-isolation.

We will continue to follow PHE advice and I shall update parents and carers about any further plans should the need arise.

Yours sincerely,



Mr P Bevan
Principal



Dr Nicholas Capstick
CEO the White Horse Federation