

Carwarden House Community School

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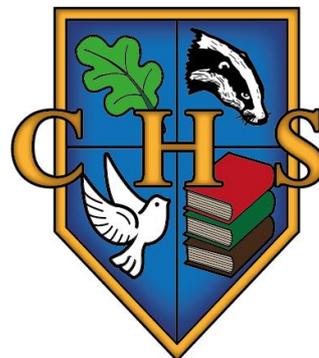
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Headteacher: Tim Stokes



12th March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

Coronavirus – school update

Please be assured that we continue to rigorously follow advice and guidance from Public Health England, the Department for Education and the UK Government. We remain committed to doing all within our power to keep all members of our school community safe and healthy. We are aware that we have significant numbers of students and staff who are particularly vulnerable if they were to contract COVID-19.

Action taken by the school

From this week:

- All non-urgent meetings away from the school premises and staff training events off-site have been cancelled.
- All visitors are required to complete a declaration as they enter the school building to minimise risk.
- New risk assessments have been completed for all off-site activities, trip and visits (including Work Experience placements). This has meant a significant reduction in the number of students leaving the school site during the day (e.g. no visits to shops in the community, no use of public transport, suspended visits to elderly residential care homes / hospitals and work experiences in public spaces, e.g. Hotels, Cafes, cancelled).
- Carwarden's Outreach Service to other schools has been suspended.
- Additional hand sanitisers have been provided in all teaching spaces.
- All students receive daily training in relation to handwashing.
- Our cleaners have implemented new procedures to ensure additional attention to premises cleanliness.

From next week:

- All courses at Colleges are cancelled (Farnborough, Brooklands & Guildford).

As a result of the continued spread of Coronavirus in the UK we are developing detailed contingency plans so that we are as prepared as we can be for any change in circumstances or direction from HM Government.

Partial School Closures

A major priority is how we manage the possibility of significant numbers of our staff being absent, either because they become ill or are advised to 'self-isolate'.

Whilst it is our stated intention to remain fully open, I wish to advise you that if 4 or more teaching staff are absent then, for reasons of safety, we will implement a partial closure (i.e. not all students will attend school). You will be informed the day before if your child is not to attend the next day and we will not send students home from school part way through the day. Please note, **it is your responsibility to inform your child's transport that they will not be coming to school.** The number of groups not able to attend on a given day will be entirely dependent on the total number of teaching staff absent. It is our hope that your child will only be off for one day at a time as we will be operating a 'rolling' programme whereby specific year groups don't attend school on a specific date. Given the proximity to exams and course deadlines we will look to ensure that Year 11s are able to attend every day.

Whole School Closure

You may be aware that the Government is considering closing all schools, colleges and Universities, following similar preventative action in other affected countries. As of 14:00 today we have not received this advice but I believe this is very likely to happen in the near future. If we follow the practice adopted in other countries then it is possible schools will close next Friday (20th March) and remain closed until after the Easter break. I wish to stress that I have no definitive information that this will or will not happen but would urge you to be thinking about child care arrangements for these eventualities.

Access to learning during school closures

We are currently making urgent preparations so that students are able to access learning opportunities if they are not able to attend school. We are proposing to post ability appropriate learning resources for each year group on our school website. We are also exploring how students (and you, the parents) will be able to contact individual teachers via email. Arrangements are being made for every teacher to be able to work remotely from home.

Keeping your child off school

We fully understand how worrying the current situation is for you and your families. We respect and will support your right to decide not to send your child to school. This may be because of your perception of the risk to your child or to other members of the family. If you decide to keep your child off school then they will be marked as an authorised absence.

If your child develops worrying symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty in breathing) we recommend you contact NHS 111 for advice. If you are advised to 'self-isolate' in this instance your child would be marked as authorised absence due to ill health.

Exams

The latest guidance from Ofqual (the regulating body for exams) is as follows:

'We recognise that students, parents, schools and colleges will be concerned about the possible impact of coronavirus on the 2020 summer exam series. Our advice at this time is to continue to prepare for exams and other assessments as normal.'

We continue to work closely with exam boards, other regulators and the Department for Education and we have met to plan for a range of scenarios, as the public would expect. Our

overriding priorities are fairness to students this summer and keeping disruption to a minimum.'

I will keep you fully informed of any updated information and potential changes to the exam schedule.

Further information

I wish to confirm that if we become aware that any member of our community is 'self-isolated' on the advice of NHS 111 because they have been in contact with an individual with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 or anyone within school receives a confirmed diagnosis themselves, we will immediately inform all stakeholders that this is the case. At this point, in line with Government guidance, we will contact Public Health England to gain advice on what we are required to do next (e.g. undertake a deep clean of the whole school).

The latest Government / NHS information about Coronavirus can be found at:

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

<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>

Specific information in relation to educational settings can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

The DfE have launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

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

Please check the school website www.carwarden.surrey.sch.uk and Parentmail for updates and latest information.

I hope you feel reassured that Carwarden House Community School is responding as effectively as it is able to the current health crisis. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you require any further information or have concerns I haven't addressed in this letter.

Kind regards,

T S Stokes

Headteacher