

16 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to update you about Coronavirus and the most recent guidance our schools have received about the virus and how to keep all pupils safe. The situation is developing constantly and Government advice can be updated / changed at short notice.

### Stay at home guidance

The current advice as published yesterday in the Government's 'Stay at home: guidance for people with confirmed or possible coronavirus' <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection> is:

- If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started.
- These symptoms are:
  - new continuous cough and/or
  - high temperature
- The guidance is now not to ring NHS 111 but to seek information on [www.111.NHS.uk](http://www.111.NHS.uk)
- The current guidance is that anyone living with (or in close contact with) someone who is self-isolating because they have symptoms does not need to self-isolate themselves, unless they develop the symptoms.

***For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection***

### Ending self-isolation

This is the current guidance on when to return from self-isolation:

*'You should remain at home until 7 days after the onset of your symptoms. After 7 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, you should contact NHS 111 online at [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111.*

*The cough may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days'*

### Possible School Closures

Although Government guidance is not currently recommending that schools close, it is possible that school closures may become part of the Government's response to the spread of the virus. We will, of course, follow Government advice in this. Staff in our schools are planning distance learning resources, which will be available via school websites or learning platforms such as Google classrooms or Microsoft teams, should schools be directed to close.



### GCSEs / A-Levels / SATs

There have been no further Government updates at this point. I am part of a wider group of CEOs and Headteachers, which has written to the Department for Education to seek clarification about the Government's plans for SATs and A-Level / GCSE examinations and I will keep you updated, if and when I hear more.

### School events

- In line with Government guidance. We will be trying to maintain business as normal as far as possible, this week. We will monitor the developing situation very carefully and will keep you informed.
- Schools will continue as planned, this week, with events such as parents' evenings and educational visits.
- Some events may need to be cancelled if they are not practical to run.
- Anyone visiting schools, for whatever reason, should not do so if they show any of the symptoms described above. We would also advise anyone in 'vulnerable groups' not to visit our schools. This would include the elderly and those with underlying health concerns.

### School visits abroad

The latest guidance states that schools are advised not to run visits abroad. There are currently no further details about dates and destinations. Our schools are liaising with tour companies regarding visits which are planned for the Pentecost (summer) term. Schools will keep you updated with the status of these visits.

We will continue to monitor the situation and keep in touch with you as it develops. Thank you for your continued support in these challenging times. As ever, the health, safety and well-being of pupils and staff are our priority.

Yours sincerely



**James McGeachie**  
CEO, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

