

18 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carers,

Further to my letter yesterday, I write to update you with the latest information regarding the coronavirus epidemic and the rapidly changing impact it is having on the College.

As with Monday's letter it may be that Government announcements put this information out of date very quickly, but the information is correct as of 4.30pm today.

### **Potential School Closure**

As a result of the additional and new measures implemented by government with respect to self-isolation on Monday 16 March 2020, and which I outlined in my letter yesterday, we are now in a position where several teachers and other staff are unable to come to school. Whilst our capacity is being stretched, we are still able to ensure that our students are taught and are safe and supervised outside of lesson time. We thus remain open and hopeful that we can remain so to support families. Of course, the situation remains volatile and subject to change in light of ongoing developments, both with respect to the practical situation on the ground at school, and according to any changing government advice, and I will of course ensure that you are kept fully informed and up to date. We will try to give as much time and warning as possible should we need to close the school, either in full or partially for certain year groups. We are also currently investigating ways to ensure that children in receipt of free school meals can get a meal if the College is closed, and will relay information to you as soon as possible once confirmed.

### **Personal Hygiene**

In the meantime, we continue to reiterate the importance of personal hygiene particularly the need to wash hands regularly and we would ask you to do the same please. Soap is available at all times for students to use, the wash areas are monitored throughout the day and students are encouraged to inform us if they notice any supplies have run out.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

As outlined in detail in the letter you will have received from our Trust CEO and Trustees, in response to the social distancing measures introduced by government, all off-site visits, extra-curricular activities, after school clubs and sporting fixtures will cease with immediate effect, until after the Easter holidays when the situation will be reviewed.

### **Examinations**

As I outlined yesterday, we are following current guidance and advice from Ofqual, 'to continue to prepare for exams and other assessments as normal'. As such, we will continue to honour the examination timetable, so the Engineering examination scheduled for tomorrow will go ahead, as will the BTEC Physical Education on Friday. If your child is currently in self-isolation because of underlying health issues (rather than having symptoms of coronavirus), and is due to take either of these examinations, if you feel they are able to sit their examination please bring them to school and we will ensure that they are isolated when completing the examination. If your child is unable to attend the examination, we will of course make a special consideration request to the relevant awarding body.

## **Remote Learning**

All students should ensure that they have their login details for Class Charts, and for all learning platforms used by respective subjects. Any issues should be directed to [datacheck@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk](mailto:datacheck@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk) where a member of our team, will be able to support and troubleshooting any access issues.

In the event of a closure, fully or partially:

- Work will be set for students for each lesson on Class Charts in each of their timetabled subjects. Where students have more than one lesson in a week, work will be set for each lesson, but may be set in one go.
- It is up to students to decide what order to complete the work during the day, but they would be advised to keep everything as normal as possible and follow the structure of their timetable. It is also important that they adhere to the lesson timings and break times, and avoid the temptation to 'overwork' or, indeed, to do too little.
- The work set may involve, where appropriate, use of online learning platforms and video support (e.g. vle.mathswatch.co.uk, www.senecalearning.com, sparkx.co.uk/maths, etc.), followed by activities for students to complete to consolidate learning. Any presentations or activities will be provided in pdf to ensure everyone can access them.
- Where possible, resources will include solutions and model responses to allow students to check their progress.

For students in self-isolation when the College remains open:

- Faculties will share resources and learning activities for students to complete via Class Charts. These year-group specific tasks will be set centrally by subject specialists.
- In addition, classroom teachers will, where possible, share specific resources pertaining to the lesson(s) missed, again via Class Charts.

## **Links To Current Advice**

- NHS Health information and advice  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Guidance for educational settings on COVID-19  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>
- Ofqual statement on coronavirus re Examinations  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/updated-statement-on-coronavirus>
- Stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- Guidance for those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

I hope that through this update I have been able to address any questions you may have had. The advice and guidance provided by relevant government departments is, as you will be of course aware,

under constant revision and is regularly updated. Please do continue to regularly monitor this advice, using the links I provided again above.

**Okehampton Food Bank**

I know that this is a very difficult time for some families and for the local community. Today, I have been in touch with the Okehampton Food Bank who feel that demand for their services will increase over the coming days and weeks. I have arranged with them, that if you feel able to make any donation these can be dropped off in College and we will deliver them. It would be fantastic if we could support the Food Bank in their work at this time.

If you would like to get in touch with the Food Bank directly for any reason at all their email address is:

[okefoodbank@gmail.com](mailto:okefoodbank@gmail.com)

They are available to support anyone who needs them.

Once again, may I thank you very much for your continued support in these extraordinary times. If you have any further concerns that you feel we may be able to help with, please do not hesitate to contact us. Look after yourselves.

Yours sincerely



Derrick Brett  
Principal