



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am writing to you regarding Barnard Castle School's current position concerning the Coronavirus pandemic.

Our approach to this crisis at Barney, and indeed most schools, has been to follow the latest guidance from the Government and Public Health England. As the Bursar, Suzanne Metcalf, has informed you in her correspondence on the matter, we have focused as a whole school on prevention and to date this appears to have been positive with regards to the health of our school community.

I set out our continued approach below:

- **Self-Isolation**

New guidance was issued this afternoon regarding self-isolation for 7 days with symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild. The 'stay at home' guidance can be found [here](#).

For now, we ask that parents follow this advice and the usual absence reporting procedures, should pupils self-isolate under the current guidance. If symptoms improve before the end of the 7 day period work can be sent home, as with any usual absence due to illness.

- **Family concerns**

We understand that for some families there are significant concerns for vulnerable members of family and they are rightly undertaking their own assessment of risk. Please do contact Peter Lavery (pjl@barneyschool.org.uk) in Senior School and Laura Turner (leb@barneyschool.org.uk) in Prep School to discuss any concerns you have and School will provide as much support as possible.

- **School trips**

It is our understanding following the statement by the Prime Minister that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will issue advice regarding the cancellation of school trips. We await confirmation of this guidance and will continue dialogue with Tour Operators. Trip Leaders will contact parents directly.

- **Events, fixtures and activities**

The guidance issued today did not extend to a ban on public gatherings such as sporting fixtures and concerts. We intend to continue with our scheduled calendar as much as possible for the time being. We will have to consider every event individually and we will notify you should there be any changes to the calendar.

If you have any queries about any of our extra-curricular activities and the coronavirus outbreak please contact Martin Pepper (mtp@barneyschool.org.uk) in Senior School and Claire Bale (clb@barneyschool.org.uk) in Prep School.

Remote learning during term-time in the event of mandatory school closure

Following this afternoon's COBRA meeting, we now know that the government has decided against closing schools at this point in time. There is, however, a possibility that this will happen in the coming weeks. As the crisis has worsened we have considered and prepared for how we can achieve continuity of education in the event of mandatory school closures.

By the end of the school day on Friday 13th March 2020, every pupil from Reception to Year 13 will have completed an age appropriate assembly or tutorial on how teaching will be delivered remotely. Teaching staff have undertaken training and are prepared to deliver teaching in this manner. Remote teaching policies are in place in both Prep and Senior School and will be communicated to parents and guardians at the appropriate time, with guidance on how pupils will learn remotely. **To be clear, such policies will only be implemented should mandatory school closures be imposed.**

These are uncertain and unprecedented times and we are endeavouring to maintain a sense of normality whilst prioritising the health of our students, staff and wider Barney community. Your understanding and support is much appreciated.

With best wishes,

Tony

Tony Jackson
Headmaster