

Tuesday 17th March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

The Westcountry Schools Trust (WeST) continues to maintain a vigilant eye on the latest government advice regarding Coronavirus. As such, WeST Headteachers met on Monday afternoon to consider the current situation regarding the Coronavirus outbreak. Our aim is to continue as normally as possible with schools remaining open, whilst taking sensible steps to mitigate any spread of infection. We also wish to be well prepared in the event of forced school closure.

Whilst we remain open we will continue to promote high levels of hygiene by;

- Ensuring that children and adults are washing their hands thoroughly, several times throughout each day.
- Encouraging everyone to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues which are then to be thrown away.
- Working together with our cleaning staff and providers to ensure that cleaning standards are maintained to a very high level.

However, as the number of cases in the UK continues to rise rapidly, we have a duty of care to protect both our pupils, staff and our wider community whilst we are open. Therefore, all schools within Westcountry Schools Trust will adopt the following approaches with effect from Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020;

#### **Pupils and staff displaying symptoms**

- All pupils and staff should follow Public Health England (PHE) advice to self-isolate at home for 14 days if they have a high temperature, and/or a new, continuous cough (this means you have started coughing repeatedly).
- If you have either of the above symptoms, follow the PHE advice to visit the NHS 111 website for further advice.

#### **Assemblies**

- All pupil assemblies will be suspended for the foreseeable future.

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### **Visitors (including parents)**

- All potential visitors should strongly consider whether a face-to-face meeting is necessary – please consider phone or email communication in the first instance.
- Anyone wishing to visit one of our schools must phone ahead and pre-book the meeting. Please do not turn up unannounced.
- If someone wishing to visit a school has recently returned from any high-risk areas such as Italy, France, Spain and other key areas as identified by the Foreign Office, they should not make a visit.
- Staff have been advised not to shake hands with visitors.
- All agreed visitors will be asked to wash and/or sanitise their hands upon arrival.
- If you have any cold/flu symptoms, no matter how minor, please do not come to the school.

### **Meetings**

- All non-urgent meetings with external people will be cancelled. Telephone or Skype meetings will be used wherever possible.
- If a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable, an appropriate distance of approx. 2 metres will be kept between the member of staff and the visitor.

### **Parents' evenings/large gatherings**

- All parent's evenings and other large gatherings involving parents and external visitors have been postponed until further notice.

### **School trips/visits**

- All upcoming school trips/visits until 30 April 2020 are postponed.
- Any upcoming trips abroad that are due to take place over the coming months are cancelled, in line with the advice from the UK government.

We recognise that some of these actions are significant and may cause some inconvenience. However, we are sure you can appreciate the need to protect pupils, staff and the wider community.

In the event of any direction to close the school, the main point of communication with parents/ carers will be via the home page of the Trust and school websites, through the text messaging service and email.

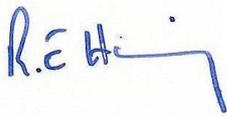
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During any closure, we will aim to provide support for students virtually to continue with their learning. This will be through a range of methods that will be discussed with children and which will also then be shared with parents/carers.

It is vital that you ensure we have your up to date contact details on our system. Please do contact your school should you believe your details need updating.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely



Rob Haring  
CEO WeST