

11 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you about Coronavirus and the measures our schools are taking to keep all pupils safe. We continue to monitor the situation regularly and to follow the advice of Public Health England (PHE).

Symptoms

Based on current evidence, Coronavirus COVID-19 presents with flu-like symptoms including a fever, a cough, or difficulty breathing. The current evidence is that most cases appear to be mild. Anyone who is concerned about health symptoms is advised to follow the advice about what to do on the Government's websites: www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public and nhs.uk or call NHS 111.

Prevention

We are encouraging all members of the school to help in slowing the spread of all germs, including Coronavirus, and protecting themselves, at home and at school, by:

- carrying tissues and using them to catch coughs or sneezes;
- placing the tissue in the bin;
- washing their hands with soap and water, or using a sanitiser gel to kill the germs,

In order to support this focus on high levels of hygiene, we have asked our site managers and cleaning teams to prioritise additional cleaning of common touch points such as door handles, push plates on doors, taps and toilet flush handles cleaning.

Some common concerns for parents:

- If you are worried your child may have Coronavirus symptoms, you should ring NHS 111 and follow the advice given. You should inform the school if your child has been advised to self-isolate or if Coronavirus is confirmed.
- You should not keep your child off school unless advised to by NHS 111.
- If you are concerned because your child has an existing illness or treatment that requires "additional precautions", such as chemotherapy treatment, you should contact NHS 111 and follow the advice given.
- Where a pupil is advised to self-isolate or if there is a confirmed case of Coronavirus in the school, the school will follow PHE advice on how they should respond.



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

The Government and Ofqual (the examination regulatory body) have published the following statement:

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

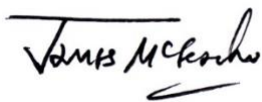
Ofqual continues to work closely with exam boards, other regulators and the Department for Education to plan for a range of scenarios, as the public would expect. Our overriding priorities are fairness to students this summer and keeping disruption to a minimum.

It is still many weeks until exams start and we will issue updated advice if necessary, giving schools and colleges as much notice as possible.'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/updated-statement-on-coronavirus>

We will continue to monitor the situation and keep in touch with you as it develops. Thank you for your support in protecting the health and wellbeing of all our pupils.

Yours sincerely



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

