



Sir John Cass's Foundation and Red Coat CofE Secondary School & Sixth Form

We will achieve excellence and inspire generations the Cass Way
Headteacher: Mr P. Woods

17th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re. latest updates on COVID-19 or Coronavirus

Unfortunately, as you know, I had to take the decision to close partially today to Key Stage 3 due to large numbers of staff who are self-isolating, following the Government's announcement yesterday evening. I will update you later today with further information, but please be mindful that it is difficult to predict whether the school can open or not in advance of the morning in question. Can I therefore ask you to please be patient and understanding. I will do everything I can to keep the school open to avoid disruption to any student learning, but I must also consider the health and safety of our students. We will endeavour to have an announcement on the school website every morning by 8am with an update regarding the position on that given day.

During any school closure, class teachers will be setting work for students via Google Classroom. Students should already have access to their accounts, but if required a guide on how to set-up Google Drive and Classroom and classroom codes can be found on the school website - <https://www.sjcr.net/for-students/google-classroom/>.

It is imperative that students make use of the resources on Google Classroom, and communicate remotely with their teachers in order to continue their progress and learning.

We will also be cancelling all school events published in the school calendar as per government guidance. We will advise you of any rescheduled dates in due course.

As you know, last night, the Government's Health Secretary made a further announcement. His full announcement can be found at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/controlling-the-spread-of-covid-19-health-secretarys-statement-to-parliament>

In terms of future attendance for staff and students at school, these are the most important words from his speech to note: *"... we are today advising that if you or anyone in your home has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough, then you should stay at home for 14 days."*

If this applies to you, please follow this advice and inform the school of your child's absence in the usual ways.

Meantime, the latest information from Public Health England for schools can be found via this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19#contents>

I have pasted the most important wording for parents and carers below:

Updated guidance for education settings on coronavirus (COVID-19)

Today (Monday 16th March), the Department for Education and Public Health England have issued updated guidance for education settings on COVID-19. This guidance will assist staff in addressing COVID-19 in educational settings. This includes childcare, schools, further and higher educational institutions.

What you need to know:

- staff, young people and children should stay at home if they are unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature to avoid spreading infection to others. Otherwise they should attend education or work as normal*
- if staff, young people or children become unwell on site with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature they should be sent home*
- clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces more often than usual using your standard cleaning products*
- supervise young children to ensure they wash their hands for 20 seconds more often than usual with soap and water or hand sanitiser and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues*

Current advice remains in place: no education or children's social care setting should close in response to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case unless advised to do so by Public Health England.

The Chief Medical Officer has advised that the impact of closing schools on both children's education and on the workforce would be substantial, but the benefit to public health may not be. Decisions on future advice to education or children's social care settings will be taken based on the latest and best scientific evidence, which at this stage suggests children are a lower risk group.

As such, school remains open to all students in years 10-13 inclusive.

We continue to do our best to enable learning, support and development for your children. We realise that last night's announcement will make this very difficult and in many ways, it is hard to follow fully both the advice of the Health Secretary and the advice to run school as normal.

We hope all of our families are coping with this highly unusual and unsettling situation. As ever, we are trying to keep you updated though the guidance is changing daily. Thank you for the messages of support and encouragement many of you have sent.

The school and all staff will try their utmost to communicate as efficiently and regularly as possible with parents and students during this school closure.

As usual, please continue to check the school website (www.sjcr.net) and social media accounts (@SJCRschool) for updates.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Woods
Headteacher



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