



Loughborough Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7FA

Tel: 0115 9744488
Email: adminoffice@wbs.school
Website: www.wbs.school

Mr T Peacock B.Sc (Hons)
Headteacher

The West Bridgford School

Friday 13th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As you can no doubt imagine the main topic of conversation in the school corridors over the past week has been the Covid-19 Coronavirus. After last night's latest recommendations from the government I felt it was appropriate to communicate how we have been preparing to face the challenges that may arise in the coming weeks. If schools are forced to close, then it will present challenges to the country as well as to individuals and families. Please be reassured that we fully understand that during any closure, it will be our responsibility to ensure that we do what is in our power, to continue to provide a service to our community; and to ensure that there is minimum disruption to students' education.

As a school our primary sources of advice are the Department for Education and Public Health England and we have continued to act on this advice as it has been released. Daily school life has continued as normally as possible, with no pupil currently waiting for a test result or self-isolating as a result of waiting for a test.

NEW ADVICE FROM GOVERNMENT – SHOULD MY CHILD BE IN SCHOOL?

New Government advice was released last night, which may impact on your decision as to whether to send your child to school. This is:

Stay at home if you have coronavirus symptoms

Stay at home for 7 days if you have either:

- a high temperature
- a new continuous cough

As we are midway through the 'normal' cold season, as well as dealing with the Covid-19 virus, this may result in a number of pupils having to self-isolate. If your child has to remain off school due to meeting these criteria, please let us know via the normal school channels. (*Phoning in or online at www.wbs.school >> Contact Us >> Report Absence*).

THE POSSIBILITY OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

School closure is never an easy decision to make. If such a decision has to be made, I am sure that all parents will understand that our priority has to be students who are preparing for exams. Therefore, our plans have been centred on prioritising these students and ensuring that teachers have the capacity during a closure, to put in place the education that exam groups will need, to enable them to continue to prepare for summer exams. Putting this in place successfully for exam groups will take a disproportionate amount of time for teachers and this is why we are taking differing approaches to different year groups when setting work across the school.

EAST MIDLANDS EDUCATION TRUST, A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE.

REGISTERED IN ENGLAND AND WALES. COMPANY NO. 7530373 REGISTERED OFFICE: LOUGHBOROUGH ROAD, WEST BRIDGFORD, NOTTINGHAM



A **first scenario** we may face is if a substantial number of staff are taken ill, this may impact on our ability to run a full school timetable. In this scenario we would focus our available staff on examination groups as well as Year 7 to minimise the impact on parental childcare needs. *Year 8 and/or 9 may be asked to stay at home.* As our capacity to run the school will be challenged, we will not initially set any online work for these students. We will communicate with parents and students via parent email, student email, Twitter and Brightspace to give as much warning as possible.

The **second scenario** we may face is the government instructing us to close. If this occurs, we will support our students remotely. On the first day of the closure teachers will need a little 'transition time' to prepare work, however on the second day after closure, online lessons for some year groups will begin online.

We have made extensive plans to ensure **Year 11** and **Year 13** (and a small number of **Year 12** in specific subjects), will be able to continue lessons at home, with their teachers online. Brightspace, our online learning platform will be used to deliver, live, online lessons to pupils, and allow work to be submitted for feedback. **Year 10** and **Year 12** will be set extended 'homework' via Brightspace in the normal way. Pupils have used Brightspace for several years now and will be able to access work and submit it for feedback from staff. To give staff time to prepare high quality lessons and tasks for these groups, in the first week of any shutdown we will **not** ask staff to prepare work for **Years 7, 8 or 9**. If the shutdown extends beyond a week this policy will be reviewed.

EXAM SEASON

Pupils have communicated their considerable anxiety to us around the coming examination season. We are closely monitoring Ofqual, the examinations regulator, to ensure we are aware of any contingency plans or changes to examination regulations or dates that are put into place. We will communicate these to parents and students as soon as we are aware of them. However, at present, the message is to prepare for examinations as normal and to anticipate that exams will take place on their normal advertised dates.

SCHOOL TRIPS

Parents may be aware that we have had to cancel several impending international trips. This aligns with the advice from government, issued last night that foreign trips are 'not advised'. School trips within the UK are being considered for risk, particularly when a school trip would involve meeting or being around large groups of 'new' people, not in a pupils normal social/school grouping. Each trip's risk assessment will be considered individually before a decision is made on it going ahead.

This is an unprecedented situation in my career, but we will continue to do all we can to carry on as normally as possible. Hopefully we can continue to adapt our daily practice to help slow the spread of the virus and the school won't close. Whilst the school remains open our pastoral staff will continue to support our students' mental health and well-being. Above all, I will communicate with you as often as possible to ensure that we can work together as a community to help our young people through this challenging time.

Regards



Tim Peacock
Headteacher
The West Bridgford School