

Executive Headteacher: Mrs J Woodhouse BSc(Hons)
Head of School: Mrs S Crawley BSc (Hons)

5 November 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

The Government has now published revised, detailed guidance for schools in light of the new national lockdown. This guidance continues to prioritise the wellbeing and long-term futures of our children and young people and confirms that schools will remain open to all students throughout this lockdown.

It remains vitally important for children to attend school, to support their education and wellbeing. It is the Government's view that time spent out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of education, and children's future ability to learn and we are committed to doing all we can to protect the education of our children and to do our utmost to minimise disruption within our school.

Senior clinicians continue to advise that school is the best place for children to be and, like all schools, we have implemented a range of protective measures to make sure that children and staff are safe. The Government advice emphasises that the risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in the classroom far outweigh the risks.

In line with the revised guidance, we are continuing to update our Covid management procedures and I would like to summarise for parents the latest updates:

Face coverings

Face coverings must be worn by adults and all students when moving around the premises outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and in communal areas, where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This is now in the Government guidance for all schools, and parents will know that we implemented this rule after half-term. It must be followed by all students and staff every day. To put it simply: a face covering in school is now as essential as a pen. With regret, the school cannot afford to provide face coverings for students. Parents may be aware that schools are not currently being provided with additional funding to cover the rising costs of Covid management, or the costs of additional supply cover for absent staff. We are having to pay for this from our 'standard' funding and we must therefore ensure that every available 'spare penny' can be invested in resources and facilities for students, not spent on face coverings. **The support of all our parents in providing their children with suitable face coverings for use in school, is very much appreciated.**

The Government continues to advise against the wearing of face coverings in classrooms by students and this remains optional. Staff will wear face coverings if they need to work more closely with a student. This close contact work is being minimised to reduce the risks to both staff and students, whilst protecting their education.

A small minority of our school community are exempt from wearing face coverings and we expect adults and students to be sensitive to those needs. If your child is exempt from wearing a face covering on the grounds of a medical or individual need, please contact the school to ensure we know. Your child will be asked to have an exemption card with them to help temporary or supply staff to know which students are exempt.

Clinically Vulnerable Children

A small number of our students have complex medical needs. This is why it is so important that all members of our school follow our procedures. The Government guidance confirms that more evidence has emerged showing there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from coronavirus including for children with existing health conditions. Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable, no longer need to follow original shielding advice. Parents are advised to speak to their child's GP or specialist clinician if they have not already done so, to understand whether their child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable, are advised by the Government not to attend school during this period. We will provide for their education using our remote learning platform and further advice about this is available from the school. Please contact your child's Year leader for information, in the first instance.

Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are **not** clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend school.

A small number of our staff also have underlying medical issues and these staff will be working remotely during the lockdown. They, along with our most vulnerable students, are much missed within the school community and we very much look forward to them returning to school when it is safe for them to do so.

Extracurricular provision

All non-essential 'out of school' activities are suspended. This suspension includes our extra-curricular sports provision including local and national fixtures. We regret that this is the case, as this is a very important part of children's wider education and something that both staff and students really enjoy. When we can safely resume our extracurricular programme, we will. It is difficult to know when this might be and our 'best guess' is that it will be in the Spring term.

Visiting the school

We are only able to accept visits to the school which are absolutely essential. This means that wherever possible, our routine meetings will be conducted by phone or using online platforms such as Microsoft Teams. Our work with Governors, school partners, and importantly our partnerships with parents, will continue to be supported through these 'remote' methods. Parents can support us by ensuring we have up to date phone and email addresses so we can stay in touch.

Transport to and from school

All our students must wear a face covering on school and public transport. This does not apply to those who are exempt on medical grounds or because of individual needs.

Exams

The Government have been clear that exams will go ahead next Summer, as they view these as the fairest and most accurate way to measure a student's attainment. The GCSE exams have been delayed by 3 weeks to help address the disruption caused by the pandemic although there

will be Maths and English exams before the May half-term break. Our dedicated school teams are doing all we can to support our students to prepare and to catch up on missed time in school. Parents with any questions about exams, should contact our Exams Officer, Mrs Farrington, on farringtons@cape.cornwall.sch.uk

I hope this is a helpful summary of the revised guidance for schools and the measures we have in place to minimise the risk of transmission. We continue to consistently enforce the national guidance of 'Hands, Face, Space' and to remind our students to regularly and thoroughly wash or sanitise their hands.

I know this is a worrying time for our families and communities. Our staff team continue to prioritise the safety of our school community and to ensure that school days are happy and enjoyable for students, despite the additional measures and restrictions. As always, should parents have any questions, a member of our team will be happy to help so please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S J Crawley". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a horizontal line that starts under the first letter and ends under the last letter, with a small arrowhead pointing to the right at the end of the line.

Mrs S Crawley
Head of School