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Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Covid-19 (coronavirus) UPDATE

There are currently no instructions from the Government to schools in the UK to close
We will keep all students, parents, carers and staff updated should this change. However, we should all be prepared in case this situation changes in the future.

We do not have any confirmed cases of the coronavirus at Cotham

This is the case for students, staff and parents/ carers. If this situation changes we will be informed immediately by Public Health England and we will take the necessary steps to inform you.

As individuals we will all have our own response to and feelings about the risks posed as a result of the coronavirus. Some of us may agree with the Government's response and others will not. However, currently the 'Delay Stage' does not include closure of schools and it does not include self isolating without coronavirus symptoms. *Please be aware that staff are not in the position to provide school work for students whose parents/ carers do not agree with the Government's current position on school closures or their current advice on when to self-isolate.*

As you might imagine staff at the school are under a significant amount of pressure on top of their existing workload to plan for any future significant and unforeseen disruption to the day to day operation of the School. However, we are working hard behind the scenes to make sure that contingency plans are in place should the current advice from the Government change. We will communicate with you in good time should this happen.

Cotham School is open as normal

For now we are managing to staff the school as normal. All lessons and most activities at Cotham are running as normal. However, please be aware that we may need to cancel trips and visits as well as some enrichment activities being held in school over the next few weeks. Upcoming sports matches have already had to be cancelled.

All curriculum essential trips eg. the Geography Slapton fieldwork will go ahead as planned

In terms of the summer exam season, at this time the expectation is that A level, BTEC and GCSE examinations will continue to be scheduled as planned and students must continue with their examination coursework and preparation. Again, we will communicate with you should the Government decide that arrangements for Public Examinations will change.





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Student wellbeing

This is undoubtedly a time of uncertainty, and it would be quite natural for anyone to feel under extra pressure. Please remember that any future disruption will be affecting students all over the country. Also remember that evidence suggests that the effects of coronavirus are likely to be mild in young people of good health, and that the NHS is going to great lengths to ensure that care is available should it be needed (see advice above).

Please remind your child that if they are anxious that there are a range of strategies they can employ to help them feel a little more on top of things. These include taking exercise where possible and appropriate, ensuring they get enough sleep, eating well, taking regular rest breaks from study and revision, talking about their concerns with others (friends, family, school staff) and/or looking online for help and support.

Staff are all doing our best in school to alleviate the anxiety that some of our students may have around the coronavirus as well as encouraging them to do the most effective thing which is to wash their hands regularly. We will be re-emphasising the importance of handwashing in tutor time on an ongoing basis and have a good supply of hand gel available in both dining halls to help with this at break and lunchtime.

In case of illness

Students should attend school and all their lessons unless, according to NHS England guidance they have either:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough

In the case of the above symptoms the guidance is to self isolate **for no less or more than 7 consecutive days only**. Please take very special care to follow NHS advice [NHS 111 website](https://www.nhs.uk).

Keeping in touch with School - Absence number - 0117 919 8019

You must inform the school immediately if you or your child have been advised or have self-selected to self-isolate or if you believe that you may have been exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Many thanks and kindest regards

Yours faithfully

Ms Jo Butler
(Headteacher)