



## All parents - Coronavirus (COVID-19): 16 March 2020

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Dear Parents

I am well aware that there is considerable anxiety regarding the continued spread of the COVID-19 virus. At Sir Thomas Rich's, our primary concern will always be the health, safety and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and other members of the school community. As a state school, we are obliged to follow the statutory advice and guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health England. The purpose of this email is to update you about what we are doing and to outline how you may support us to ensure the school community is as safe and as calm as possible.

### **What have we already done?**

We have emphasised to students that the most important thing that individuals can do to protect themselves is to wash their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds with soap and water especially before eating, after coughing and sneezing and after using the lavatory and travelling on public transport. We have also installed a number of hand sanitisers around the school buildings which are being used frequently by staff and pupils. We have implemented enhanced cleaning with an increased disinfecting regime of regularly touched surfaces such as door handles, stair bannisters and keyboards.

### **What do we need you to do?**

We continue to ask that families observe the Government's advice to all individuals who have a new continuous cough or a high temperature. If pupils become unwell on site with these symptoms, we will ask for them to be collected from School. We understand that some individuals are more cautious and have decided to self-isolate either because they believe they may have been in contact with someone with the virus or that they have serious underlying health conditions and this is the only safe option. The School will respect these individual families' choices.

If your child is unwell, please report this as you would normally using the School's absence procedures.

### **Further action we are taking:**

Whilst the current advice is that no education setting should close in response to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases unless advised to do so by Public Health England, we have made the decision to concentrate on our core purpose. As a consequence, we have decided that for the remainder of this term, we will not proceed with:

- residential trips,
- Sports' fixtures,
- day trips
- The Spring Concert

Additionally, we will be reviewing all forthcoming events on a case-by-case basis as we are updated by the Government.

The new requirement for students and staff to self-isolate if either displaying symptoms or living with someone displaying symptoms will have an impact on the ability of the School to function normally and I know that the cancellation of these activities will be disappointing, but our priority must be the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff and making sure that the School can remain open as instructed to do so by the Government.

### **What happens if the School were to close?**

If we were asked to close, we would alert parents by email, the School website and indeed via Gloucestershire County Council's closure site. Detailed contingency plans to set work for each class are already underway and these would be communicated to parents should this be necessary.

### **GCSE and A level examinations:**

Finally, many students and parents are extremely concerned about the potential disruption to the forthcoming GCSE and A-Level external examinations. Whilst there is much in the media regarding this, at the time of writing, we have received no information other than that these examinations are planned to happen as normal. We are continuing to seek further guidance from the Government, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and examination boards and would of course inform you if there were to be any changes.

This is clearly a difficult time for all. Please rest assured that we will do all that we can to work with you to address challenges together.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Morgan

HEADMASTER

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