



15th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is only three days since I last wrote to you about Coronavirus and its implications for the school but this is a fast moving situation and I do need to keep you in touch.

The first thing to report is that we do not have any staff who have tested positive for the virus nor do we have any who are self-isolating. Nor, to the best of my knowledge, do we have any students who have tested positive. Our rate of absence is rather higher than usual, but no parent has notified us that their son or daughter is self-isolating.

My second point concerns a very significant change. As I explained last week, it is Public Health England who would consider whether a school should be closed. They would only make this assessment after learning that a member of the school – be they staff or student – had tested positive. The government's new policy, as you will have seen, is that testing will be restricted to those cases which are apparently more serious. Most of us who may develop the symptoms are directed simply to isolate ourselves for seven days. We would not be tested, nor would we have to register our condition with Public Health England.

You see that this creates a contradiction. It is one that I'm trying urgently to resolve. On the one hand I am instructed that it is only Public Health England who can authorise closure of the school. On the other hand I find that Public Health England will no longer routinely learn of any positive test results among our students or staff.

When I am finally able to speak to someone who can unravel this contradiction I shall be back in touch with you.

In the meantime, there is one helpful step which I'm asking you to take. If circumstances lead your son or daughter to self-isolate, would you please let us know through the absence extension (01905 774421 and press 1.)

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Waters