

## **Information about Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 however, is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in December 2019. The incubation period of COVID-19 is somewhere between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, it is likely they have not been infected. The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection

- cough;
- difficulty in breathing; and/or
- fever.

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, such as older people and/or those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. As it stands, there is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have yet to have been reported in children.

### **How COVID-19 is spread?**

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

### **Prevention**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus. There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including

- students/staff who feel unwell (or develop high temperature or a new cough) should stay at home for 7 days;
- washing your hands often - with liquid soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport; covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin.
- Students, staff and visitors should wash their hands

before leaving home;  
on arrival at school;  
after using the toilet;  
after breaks and sporting activities;  
before food preparation;  
before eating any food, including snacks; and  
before leaving school.

- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell;
- if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please use the Coronavirus COVID-19 symptom checker on NHS Direct Wales. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment;

- see the latest information about novel coronavirus on the Public Health Wales website.

### **Actions taken by the school to support the wellbeing of students and staff**

Staff have been working to establish a continuity plan in response to the pandemic. This also includes planning for delivery of activities in the situation of a forced closure and planning for a return to 'usual practice' should a short-term and/or long-term closure take place.

Preventative measures have been introduced, including

- Establishing a critical incident team to plan for all eventualities;
- Identify members of the community with underlying medical conditions which place them in an 'at risk' group;
- Raising awareness of the symptoms closely linked to COVID-19 and the precautionary measures through form tutors and visual displays;
- Purchased additional quantities of alcohol based hand sanitizer and liquid soap;
- Additional cleaning of regularly touched surfaces throughout the school day ie. door handles, hand rails etc;
- Earlier lunch time for some year groups to ease pressure and allow greater spacing;
- As of 16th March 2020, all non-essential activities will be either postponed or cancelled ie. sporting fixtures, visiting speakers, parental meetings etc..

### **In the event of a full/partial school closure (short-term and/or long-term)**

The school will only close where there is direct guidance/recommendation from appropriate authorities eg. The Government / Public Health Wales and/or where there are insufficient numbers of staff available to safely deliver an education to students. In the event of a school closure, the majority of staff will not be able to access the school site.

Therefore, in this situation the school will:

- Provide students in all year groups (with increased support for those students preparing to sit public examinations in the summer) with online materials to facilitate home/distant learning;
- Provide paper-based materials for those students who do not have access to either a mobile device and/or internet (as part of the preparation phase the school will seek to identify where this is the case – if this is pertinent to you, please contact the school office);
- Communicate with families/students on a regular basis to provide updates on recovery phase ie. safe return to normal school life.

Upon return to 'normal practices' the school will:

- Undertake an audit for examination classes to identify skills-gaps in readiness for the summer GCSE examination series;
- Communicate with relevant awarding bodies to make them aware of any requirements for special considerations;

- Respond to any ongoing support required for students and/or staff. This may include counselling services.

### **Communication**

The school will work closely with relevant authorities to make decisions which are in the interests of all members of the community. However, to support the safety, wellbeing and continued learning of students the school asks that all families

- Download the school app from the relevant store / following the instructions on the school webpage
- sign up to the school twitter feed @SJ\_WXM to be able to access relevant information in the eventuality of a partial/full closure;
- Ensure that the school has the correct email address in order to maintain communication throughout the process;
- Talk to child(ren) about hygiene practices and make use of relevant sites to reduce anxiety.

### **Useful Information**

Information is regularly being updated via the UK Government (COVID-19), Welsh Government (COVID-19), and Public Health Wales websites.

**Mr C J Wilkinson**  
**Headteacher**