

11th March 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians

It is with regret that I have had to make the decision today to cancel this year's ski trip to Italy. This is not a decision I have taken lightly however, I do feel it is in the best interest of all concerned following the developing reports of the Coronavirus outbreak. The key reasoning behind this decision is as follows:

- My over-riding concern is the health and welfare of the boys and staff attending the trip, the effect on their families on their return and of course, the effect on the wider school community
- I have spoken to the insurance company and if we cancel this week parents will receive a full refund;
- If we choose to go to an alternative destination such as Austria, then the right for a full refund will no longer be valid and the most parents could expect is 50% of the full cost, if they chose to withdraw their son from the trip
- Advice about international travel is changing daily and I would have real concerns that boys could be stranded abroad, made to self-isolate whilst abroad or indeed made to self-isolate upon their return
- The same also applies to staff and I am mindful that there could already be much school disruption over the coming weeks if staff and boys are expected to self-isolate for seven days, even if they only have common cold symptoms, as suggested by the Government today. The period following Easter is an incredibly tense and stressful time for Year 11 and I have to ensure all key staff are here, where possible, in order to support them through this crucial time in their life
- I am only too aware that a number of staff are reluctant to travel but have agreed to do so as they do not want to let the boys down. I also know a number of parents feel in a similar position with regard to letting their own son go. I therefore feel duty bound to make a decision to avoid all staff and parents feeling this way.

As a keen skier myself and having attended many Brymore ski trips, I am only too aware of the value of a week away learning to ski with your friends. I am sure many of the boys will be disappointed, however, by making the decision now I am ensuring that at least boys and staff are as safe as they can be and that parents aren't also having to deal with a significant loss of money. I also know Mr Ashton is extremely disappointed and we have been discussing the matter daily, however, I know that both he and all of the staff on the trip agree with this decision. The boys will be informed later this morning.

Many thanks for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely



MARK THOMAS
Headteacher