6th March 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians

I am writing to update you on our intentions should the Covid-19 virus progress as indicated by the UK Government.

The Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust have issued a statement of intent to all staff within the Trust and it is from this information with which I am updating you today. The statement of intent is based on the ongoing guidance being issued by the Department for Education on a daily basis, in collaboration with Public Health England.

The latest estimates provided by the government suggest that up to 80% of the population of the UK will contract Covid-19. It is likely therefore that there will be disruption to how our schools operate.

This letter sets out our intent in the event of full or partial school closure and will be amended according to subsequent guidance published by the DfE over time. It sets out our intention as to how we will manage school disruption and may evolve over time.

It is our intention that the disruption of education to the boys is reduced to an absolute minimum.

**Students unwell**

Our current advice regarding boys is unchanged. If a boy is unwell parents should follow the guidance issued by Public Health which is available on their website. We will continue to send appropriate updates home and post them on our website. The advice is currently unchanged with the main recommendations being advice related to personal hygiene.

**Staff unwell**

Following Public Health advice, any staff falling ill after travel abroad will be asked to contact the 111 advice help line. We will then follow the advice issued on a case-by-case basis which may include self-isolation. At present no member of staff has travelled to a high risk area.

However, we recognise that should cases across the country increase significantly, guidance will change and we are therefore prepared for this to happen.

**Scenario 1 - Full School Closure**

As we have seen in Italy, it may be that as a measure to attempt to contain the spread of Covid-19 the government decides to implement a programme of full school closures.

However, at the present time the current advice remains that no school should issue a closure notice unless told to do so by Public Health England.

If a closure is necessary, teaching staff will be expected to set and publish work that boys can complete at home for each lesson that they are timetabled to teach.

All boy’s work will be published by Year group, subject and teacher for all pupils on Show My Homework and instructions to access this will be on the website and can be seen below. We can reasonably expect that any full school closure will last for a minimum of two weeks, potentially longer, so teaching staff will be encouraged to provide learning online, which may include pre-published teaching/instructional videos - for example tuition on YouTube, Hegarty Maths, MyMaths, MathsWatch, Educake and Accelerated Reader.

All boys in Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) will be expected to read for a minimum of one hour a day and Year 10 and 11 will be expected to revise from their class notes under these circumstances.

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**Scenario 2 - Partial School Closure**

We can reasonably expect that at any given point during the height of the spread of the virus that up to 20% of the workforce may be unable to attend. It is likely that this scenario will be a reality over a number of weeks/months.

It is reasonable to assume also that a similar percentage of boys will also be unable to attend school.

A partial school closure may be implemented through joint discussion between the CEO and myself should such numbers of staff be unable to attend Brymore so that it functions safely. Under such circumstances and where a partial closure of a school is implemented, teaching staff will be expected to work flexibly. Year groups closest to public examinations will take priority - Years 11 and 10. It is likely that a normal timetable will be suspended and that teaching staff will be expected to teach in subject’s/year groups which may be unfamiliar to them. However, they will be able to support boys as appropriate.

It is likely that classes will be amalgamated in some year groups if student numbers are low.

In the event of a partial school closure I will assess the viability of the school opening fully the next day and will advise parents by 4.00 pm of plans for the next day.

**School visits and trips**

Where possible, and where we feel it is safe, school visits, trips and key events will continue as normal. However, the situation will be monitored daily and we will follow advice from the DfE and Public Health England and also be mindful of staff availability. At this time, the ski trip to Italy is due to go ahead as is Lambing Day this Saturday.

**Boarding**

If it is necessary to close the school for particular year groups as part of a partial school closure, we will do our best to accommodate boys in year groups who would ordinarily be sent home. Our ability to do this will again depend on the availability of staff. However, the expectation will be that they are picked up.

In the event of a suspected case within a boarding house we will liaise closely with Public Health England and the DfE and follow their direct advice.  In the event that we are required to close our boarding accommodation work will be provided for boarders in the same way as for a full school closure. This will also apply if we need to close a boarding house due to staff absence.

Please ensure that you have made alternative arrangements if you are unable to collect your son when requested to do so.

**Keeping you updated**

We will ensure updated information is posted on our website on a regular basis which will be date and time stamped, so you are aware when it has been posted and we will endeavour to contact parents through our messaging service if there are any significant changes.

I am sure at this point it may seem that these steps are unnecessary but I am sure you will agree it is important that we are prepared for the suggested increase in illness and that we are particularly prepared to ensure the more vulnerable members of our community are not put at an unnecessary higher level of risk. I am also mindful of the welfare of boarders who may be a long way from home. I thank you for your support and patience and ask that you continue to follow advice from *reliable* sources to prevent the spread of the Covid 19 virus. Should public advice change we will ensure you have the most relevant and up-to-date information.

Yours sincerely



Mark Thomas

Headteacher