

## **COVID-19 – HELPING US ALL TO STAY SAFE**

As our community and country is adapting to the extent of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the way it will affect our daily lives, I want to address concerns you may have about the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and the steps we're taking as a school to continue our focus on keeping everyone safe and healthy.

Given the number of visitors we would have on site and in order to ensure our ability to comply with Government guidance, we have made the decision to postpone the planned Parents' Evenings for Year 7 on Wednesday 18 March and Post 16 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 25 March. For Year 7, we will contact you in the future with a new date for staff to contact you and discuss your child's progress. For Years 12 and 13, more details will follow with your child's Progress Check which is due to be sent home on Thursday, 19 March. Postponing these important evenings is not a decision we have taken lightly. We hope you will continue to support us in taking these additional measures.

Following the letter we sent home last week from Rob Haring, CEO of Westcountry Schools Trust, and the measures we are taking in all our schools, I wanted to take this opportunity to keep you informed, following further updates received from the government over the weekend

Our number one priority is the safety of anyone who is present on site whether that is students, visitors, volunteers, contractors, employees and their families. At Plymstock School we are maintaining our high standards of cleanliness within the school and supporting all our students and staff to maintain high standards of personal hygiene.

- This week, in addition to this support, all students will have a further detailed assembly from our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Leeshia Walton, on how they can help continue to support the government's campaign on personal hygiene.
- We will continue to follow all Public Health England guidance and advice to ensure the health and wellbeing of all students and staff; this remains a priority.

We are closely monitoring the situation to make sure we are taking all precautions to protect our staff, students and the wider local community.

### **Our School like all schools will remain open**

Despite the discussion nationally in the media, the current advice remains in place: no education or children's social care setting should close in response to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case unless advised to do so by Public Health England.

The Chief Medical Officer has advised that the impact of closing schools on both children's education and on the workforce will be substantial, but the benefit to public health may not be. Decisions on future advice to schools will be taken based on the latest and best scientific evidence, which at this stage suggests children are a lower risk group.

### **To support the delay of the spread of the virus**

Any student or member of staff who is worried they have symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been encouraged to stay home in line with the latest guidelines.

The Department for Health and Social Care has asked *anyone who shows certain symptoms to stay at home for 7 days*, regardless of whether they have travelled to affected areas. This means people should stay at home and avoid all but essential contact with others for 7 days from the point of displaying mild symptoms, to slow the spread of infection.

**The symptoms are:**

- **A high temperature (37.8 degrees and above)**
- and/or
- **A new, continuous cough**

You do not need to call NHS 111 to stay at home.

**If your symptoms worsen during your stay at home period or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online at [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk).** If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

**If I am self-isolating should I take my children out of school?**

The advice is NO, parents should not come to the school site but your children can attend school whilst you self-isolate.

**Stay at home advice:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Thank you for taking the time to read this message and for your ongoing support and understanding.

Best wishes

Rob Pearsall

HEADTEACHER