

17 March 2020

Dear Parent

Coronavirus Update

As you know, the Government advice regarding Coronavirus changed yesterday as follows:

- If anyone in your household has symptoms of Coronavirus, then all in the household must stay at home for 14 days. Please notify your relevant school office as soon as possible if this affects your child.
- People who may be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 including those who are pregnant, over 70 or have underlying health conditions are advised to self-isolate.
- The Government are also advising that social contact be minimised and unnecessary travel be eliminated. Therefore, from tomorrow, Wednesday 18 March all before school and after school clubs and sports practises will be cancelled. Wraparound care at each site will continue as normal.

These measures will make operating our school very challenging as many staff and pupils may now need to self-isolate. We are evaluating the impact on the day-to-day running of the school and may have to aggregate classes and similar measures in order to continue. As the pandemic develops, it seems likely that the Government will shortly take the action of closing schools as other governments have across Europe.

We have been reluctant to deviate from Government policy but are now considering whether it might be better to affect an early and smooth transition to remote and online learning for your children rather than wait for a potentially sudden shutdown. If Downsend does close, Downsend Plus and Early Years Plus will not be open over the Easter break. Your opinion as parents is important and Cognita have sent a short parent survey to you today to capture this. If you have not received this survey, but would like to do so, please contact kate.timms@downsend.co.uk who will be able to send you a paper version. Please be assured that, whatever the changing dynamics over the coming days and weeks, we will maintain as high a standard of education as possible for your children, whether in the classroom or through adopting our remote and online learning protocol.

We hope that you and your family stay safe and well during these unprecedented times.

Yours sincerely



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Headmaster



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