



**DOWNSEND**  
SCHOOL



Proud to be nominated in the  
**Independent Schools of  
the Year 2019 Awards**

Downsend School, 1 Leatherhead Road, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 8TJ, UK

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13 March 2020

Dear Parent

We are writing to update you on our coronavirus response and continued planning following the government's COBRA meeting yesterday. Many parents have been in touch in recent days to ask about a potential school closure – we are keen to maintain frequent and open communication with you in these unprecedented times.

While the UK has moved into the 'Delay' phase of its Coronavirus Action Plan, the official government advice for schools remains unchanged. However, yesterday the Government did say, "Anyone with symptoms indicative of Coronavirus should self-isolate for seven days." On the NHS website it states, stay at home for 7 days if you have either:

- A high temperature and/or a new continuous cough

As you know, we are following all Public Health England (PHE), Department for Education and NHS guidance. In addition, we have already introduced some additional measures such as asking parents to temperature check pupils before attending school, self-reporting of families' travel plans, an increased level of cleaning and an emphasis on hand washing and hygiene in school.

We will continue with this approach while preparing for the possibility that school closures may be introduced at any time. We are committed to maintaining a normal teaching and learning environment for our pupils, whilst carefully monitoring the fast-moving situation with our Cognita Response Team. We are also drawing upon the experience of further Cognita schools, namely in Spain, that are now successfully delivering remote learning programmes amid mandatory closures.

All Pre-Prep teachers attended a training session at the end of the day yesterday focused on how we would deliver learning online. Ideas across the 3 Pre-Preps were shared today and we are currently collating them into our implementation plan which we hope to start sharing with you next week to help you understand how home learning would look for your children should it become necessary.

Our guiding principle is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students while managing this challenging situation in a calm and proportionate manner. To that end, our Group Wellbeing Director for Cognita, Beth Kerr, has prepared some helpful tips for parents on protecting the emotional wellbeing of our children at this time. These are attached along with our latest 'Cognita Be Well Comments' resource, on the topic of sleep, which was due to be released this month in the ordinary course of events.

Please don't hesitate to contact us should you have any concerns. By next week we aim to have a new page on our school website to share our latest updates in relation to coronavirus, making it easier for parents to view key information.

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As ever, thank you for your support. In closing, I would like to share with you this [video update](#) for Cognita employees by our Group CEO Chris Jansen. While this was directed at employees, I thought you may find it of interest too. We will draw on all the resources we have at our disposal to ensure a safe and positive educational experience for your children.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Vanessa Conlan

Headteacher Pre-Prep Epsom and Leatherhead

Mrs Tessa Roberts

Headteacher Pre-Prep Ashtead

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