

27th February 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Public Health England – advice on Coronavirus and COVID-19

We recognise that there is growing anxiety regarding the spread of this virus internationally and the chances of an increase in cases in the United Kingdom. I wanted, therefore, to let you know that we are following the advice of *Public Health England* (PHE) carefully in all of our academies in *The Collegiate Trust*, and to repeat key messages here. I also wanted to reassure you that we are monitoring the situation regarding upcoming international trips due to go from our secondary academies. At all times we shall act upon the advice of the Foreign Office and travel agents and will inform you accordingly; at this point we have no reason to consider changes to arrangements but will be in touch immediately if the advice from authorities changes.

It is important to remember that the risk in this country is currently very low, and all of our pupils and students should attend school as normal, subject to the advice and guidance from PHE repeated in this letter. We also know that the best way to keep this risk low is to heed the advice of medical experts, including simple but effective procedures to maintain good hygiene:

- Always carry disposable tissues and use them to “catch” a cough or a sneeze – then put the tissue into the bin and wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser.
- Wash hands regularly, particularly after using public transport; use hand sanitiser if soap is not available. Whilst in school, wash hands regularly, particularly at break and lunchtimes and after sport.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with others who are unwell.

PHE has now issued advice to people who have travelled from certain countries and areas in the last couple of weeks. Please note this advice differs for each category of area or country:

1. If you have returned from the following areas or countries since 19th February, you should not come into school but should contact NHS 111 and follow their advice, ***even if you have no symptoms***:
 - Bertinico, Casalpusterlengo, Castaglione D’Adda, Codogno, Fombio, Maleo, San Fiorana, Somaglia, Terranova dei Passerini, Vo. These are all towns in northern Italy.
 - Iran
 - Daegu or Cheangdo in South Korea
 - Wuhan City or Hubei Province in China
2. If you have travelled from the China, Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, Northern Italy, Vietnam, Myanmar or Macau in the last fourteen days

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and feel well, you should **carry on with your day-to-day work and education as normal**, whilst following the standard hygiene procedures listed above and other guidance listed here.

If you have travelled from these countries in the last fourteen days **and feel unwell**, you should:

- Stay indoors and avoid contact with others, as you would with other flu viruses.
- Do not attend school.
- Do not go to your GP, walk-in centre or hospital. You must call NHS 111 immediately and follow the advice you are given.

The government is producing advice for schools on this situation, which you can find at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Should there be any change in this advice, or any issue that we need to alert you about, I shall write again. Can I ask that you reassure your children and thank you for your support in this situation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordon Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Gordon Smith
Chief Executive