



Hanley Castle High School

and Sixth Form Centre

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Dear Parent

I am writing to update you on Hanley Castle's plans to deal with the current Coronavirus situation.

The new school year has started in an incredibly positive manner. Students have returned to school with excellent attitudes - both to their learning, and to the safety measures that we have put in place to reduce the risk of any transfer of infection.

No member of the school community, either a member of staff or a student, has tested positive for Coronavirus so far. However, although the situation in South Worcestershire is better than that nationally, we are aware of a small number of confirmed cases in our area.

The school has followed Government guidelines and advice to develop robust plans to cope with either a single positive case, or a wider deterioration in the Coronavirus situation.

Single positive case

If the school is notified that a student or teacher has tested positive for Coronavirus, we will work with the Local Authority Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT), and the Public Health England Health Protection Team (HPT) to agree a course of action.

The initial focus will be on identifying close (within 1 metre) or proximity (within 2 metres for 15 minutes) contacts, as only those who may be at a genuine risk of developing infection will be asked to self-isolate.

These close or proximity contacts will be notified by the school, and should begin immediately a 14-day period of self-isolation to ensure that the chances of a single case becoming an outbreak are minimised.

The advice and guidance are clear – there is no need for anyone other than the close and proximity contacts of the student concerned to self-isolate. Unless notified directly by us, **all other students should attend school as normal.**

A local outbreak (Tier 2)

In the event of a deterioration in the Coronavirus situation, either locally or in the wider area, a school may be required to move to what the Government calls 'Tier 2'.

Tier 2 measures allow a school to continue to operate while breaking the chain of infection.



The school will remain open for all staff, and for all children of key workers and vulnerable children.

The rest of the school will be split into two halves by year group bubbles. For example, one half might consist of the Year 7, Year 9 and Year 11 bubbles, while the other half might consist of the Year 8, Year 10 and joint Year 12 and 13 sixth form bubbles.

The first half (Years 7, 9 and 11) would remain in school and be taught as normal for two weeks. The second half (Years 8, 10, 12 and 13) would be taught at home for those two weeks, allowing them to self-isolate.

At the end of the two weeks the situation would reverse, with Years 8, 10, 12 and 13 returning to school for the next two weeks, while Years 7, 9 and 11 would be taught at home.

This two week on / two week off rota ensures that the chain of infection is broken without requiring a full lockdown. It also ensures that students never lose touch with their teachers, or get behind in their learning.

It does, of course, rely on students not socialising with each other out of school. If they do not self-isolate, the opportunity to break the chain of infection will be lost.

Remote education plans

As a school, we have learnt a great deal from the lockdown earlier this year.

As stated earlier, all teachers will remain in school to teach those students who are in school and to provide on-line learning for any students who are self-isolating at home due to a single case or the implementation of the Tier 2 rota.

Teachers are receiving training to make this the best possible learning experience for students. In addition, we are currently training students and giving them opportunities to practise using on-line technology for homework and other activities.

More details of our remote education plans will be issued next week so that you are able to support your child if the need arises.

A survey will be issued shortly to ensure that we are aware of any problems that a student might experience in accessing our on-line provision. Please look out for it. You can also contact the head of the relevant key stage if you wish to discuss any access issues.

GCSE and A level exams

The Government is determined that these will go ahead as planned in the summer.

However, parents should note that the exams may be held later than originally scheduled (perhaps ending late in July).

Some content has been removed from GCSE courses, while the assessment methods for some aspects of A level courses may have changed. Teachers are fully aware of these changes and have adapted their plans and teaching as required.



There is no need for students to be worried about either the GCSEs or A levels – their teachers have the situation well in hand. All that Year 11 and Year 13 need to do is to continue to work to the very best of their ability, whether in school or at home.

Face masks now mandatory on all school buses

Government guidance has changed. From Monday 5th October the wearing of face masks or coverings on all school transport is mandatory. This applies to all public buses, school coaches, minibuses and taxis.

I would like to conclude by thanking parents for your amazing support and patience during these trying times. The school continues to seek and act on advice from the Local Authority, Public Health England and the Government. We are listening to our parents and our students, and trying to make our communication with you as effective as possible. These are challenging times, but the school will continue to do its very best, both in terms of educating our students and keeping them as safe as possible.

My very best wishes



Lindsey Cooke
Headteacher

