



9th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus COVID 19

Over the past few days, I have been working closely with colleagues at Venturers Trust to put plans in place to minimise the risks associated with the coronavirus infection. We remain at the containment stage at this point and, to our knowledge, there have been no confirmed cases in our immediate area. We are also under very clear advice from Public Health England (PHE) that schools should remain open unless they give a direction to close. We have nevertheless put a significant number of contingency actions and plans in place.

Most importantly, we have been working with our pupils and staff to establish best practice in hand washing and hygienic behaviour to minimise risks of spreading the virus. You may have seen posters up around school or on reception and students will be given further guidance via assemblies and posters in the toilets. If your child feels unwell, please report their absence through our normal channels, do not let them come into school, and keep us updated on their condition. We inevitably need to be more cautious than usual.

The central team have been working with cleaning contractors across the Trust to ensure that they are prioritising the surfaces and areas most likely to spread infections. We have also put plans in place so that if necessary we can commission a deep clean at short notice to meet PHE's specification. We have also been developing our contingency plans for how the school might operate if there is a much higher incidence of the illness.

Upcoming school trips and visits

We are keeping visits and activities under review and may need to limit these if the assessed risk increases. At this time, however, most school activities are continuing as 'business as normal'.

Please be assured that we will update you as and when required. We will only take the decision to cancel pre-arranged trips or visits for one of the two reasons below:

- a) Following Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice banning travel to the area or country in question.
- b) If, as a school, we believe the risk outweighs the enrichment benefits of continuing as planned.

If you have any specific questions about forthcoming trips please contact the school to the following email debbie.kirk@colstonsgirls.org. However, please note that, in general, we won't be able to give any further detail about the school's position and we will update parents as soon as we can regarding any trips where the situation changes.

The Department for Education has launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

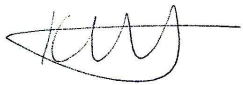
Phone: 0800 046 8687 - Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

The latest guidance for schools is available here www.gov.uk/coronavirus

While it is important that we do not over-react, it is right to plan ahead and our website, social media and direct communications will aim to keep you fully up to date on how we are continuing to manage the situation.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Kerry McCullagh
Acting Principal

