

Wednesday 18th March 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

I am writing to thank you for your continued support through these unprecedented times. I have been touched by the number of positive emails and messages of thanks that I have received from our whole community as we try to support the health and wellbeing of all students and staff, whilst endeavouring to continue to educate your children. These are challenging times and our UCGS spirit of unity has been very clear to see!

We continue to have no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Upton Court Grammar School. However, we do have a number of staff and students who are at increased risk, either themselves or have dependents who are at increased risk, as outlined by Public Health England [HERE](#)

In line with this guidance, we strongly advise members of staff and students who are at increased risk to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures. As a result, it is not possible to provide lessons for whole school and it is for this reason why our school is only open to Years 11, 12 and 13.

National school closures are an option in the government's plan to combat the spread of COVID-19 but this will only be implemented 'at the right time' and according to the scientific information analysed by experts (we are expecting an announcement soon). If and when school closures are mandated by government, I will inform you of this. Until such a decision is taken, we will remain open to Years 11, 12 and 13 and the school day timings will continue as usual, with a 3:05pm finish every day, apart from 1:25pm on Wednesdays. Please note that visits, events, detentions and extra-curricular activities have been postponed until further notice.

The government continues to advise that:

- if you live on your own and develop symptoms of a new continuous cough or high temperature, self-isolate for 14 days;
- If you live with someone who has developed the above symptoms, self-isolate for 14 days.

Should your child develop such symptoms whilst at school, please support the school and the wider community by collecting your child immediately following a call from the school office. Should you need further medical advice please call 111 or use NHS 111 online.

For students who are studying at home, I recommend that they stay at home, undertake independent study, following their normal timetabled lessons. Our staff are busily making resources and learning activities available on our school SharePoint. Students should access their work and learning using their Office 365 school login, rather than emailing individual teachers or staff. Please support your child in using this time to also review their prior learning and to extend it through the shared resources and through engaging in super curricular activities, if possible.

There is evidence from the science of successful learning, which shows that certain activities promote better retention and understanding over time. I would encourage your child to use these strategies and the resources produced by The Learning Scientists to support them in their independent study:

<https://www.learningscientists.org/downloadable-materials>

The school office@uptoncourtgrammar.org.uk email address will be monitored on a daily basis and we request that parents communicate via this email address. This is to ensure that we can respond to any questions you may have as emails sent directly to members of staff may not be responded to, for example, if that member of staff is unwell, etc. We will aim to respond to all emails sent to office@ within 48 hours, however, ask that you are patient with us during this time.

If there are any further changes to our school circumstances or government advice, I will inform parents, as I have done at every stage so far. I would advise parents to limit the amount you read or share that is not from school or an official source as this is likely not to be accurate. Be under no illusion that social media comments add further pressure to an already challenging situation. Please contact the school directly if you have any questions. If you feel the need to make comments about COVID-19 on social media or elsewhere, please be do so mindfully and show the kindness and restraint we teach our young people about responsible use of social media. Thanks to those who have already encouraged others to do the same.

We hope that the above information and all the information provided to date has given you clarity and reassurance. I am incredibly grateful to all parents and carers for your understanding and support over the past few weeks. Our community is stronger as a result, despite the current challenges we all face.

Yours faithfully,



M. Pritchard
Headteacher