

City of Armagh High School

Principal:

Mr C Douglas, BEng, PGCE, MEd

Vice Principal:

Mrs K P Mulholland, BSc (Hons), PGCE, PQH(NI)

13th March 2020

To: All Members of our School Community

Re: Update on COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

At City of Armagh High School, we take the health and safety of our pupils and staff very seriously, so we are sharing the latest update from the government's response to COVID-19 and guidance from the Public Health Agency on steps you should be taking.

There is currently no cause for concern at the school, but we will keep you informed about any developments and ensure we are keeping the school clean to best prevent the spread of any virus. Should a cause for concern arise we will work with the department for Public Health to risk assess the situation. We have been working very closely with our cleaning contractor to take proactive approaches to managing this risk from the virus. There is thorough cleaning of surfaces daily including doors, table tops and wall areas that are accessible to staff and students. Further, during the school day, key contact surfaces are also cleaned by our caretaking team. Toilets are checked and cleaned regularly and hand wash is continuously replenished. I do want to allay fears of parents, where the school acts **as a precaution** it does not constitute a confirmed or positive case of coronavirus. So far, we **have not** had any confirmed cases of the virus.

As a precaution we will be postponing the year 8 parents' meeting on Thursday 19th March 2020. All pupils will be required to attend school that day as it will be a normal school day. Further, as per relevant guidance, sporting fixtures are also cancelled. The PE team will be informing pupils accordingly. Please also note that the Spring Concert scheduled for 25th March is also postponed. Assemblies are also cancelled until further notice. These measures are in a bid to avoid increased public contact.

The best advice remains to wash hands thoroughly with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds. To ensure a consistent message, Form Tutors have delivered a presentation to all pupils in morning registration. Do please re-iterate the important messages with your son or daughter at home. All members of the school community taking personal responsibility for having a supply of tissues and if preferred, their own medicated wipes or sanitising hand gel, will play a big part in containing the spread in our community. Research indicates that handwashing cuts the chances of contacting a respiratory illness such as coronavirus by 54% - the best odds of a deterrent.

At the time of writing, guidance is such that anyone with a "new, continuous" cough or high temperature is now advised to self-isolate for seven days as the government moves to the "delay" phase. In this respect, pupils displaying such symptoms should remain at home, and as per any other absence, parents / carers should notify the school. To support learning pupils can access work via Microsoft Teams using their school e mail log in and password. Form tutors have supported pupils in accessing their username and password. There are support videos on our website <https://www.cityofarmagh.org/> to aid pupil and parent access. Please note that in the event of a school closure all pupils will be able to access appropriate work via Microsoft Teams. Parents should also be aware that in the event of a closure the website and text messaging service will be key vehicles for communication and therefore should be monitored.

I am sure you will appreciate that this is a fluid situation, therefore, your understanding and support at this time is most appreciated.

Yours sincerely



C Douglas
Principal

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