



*'We value the power of education to change lives.'*

16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for the messages of support and sympathy received from parents as we work in school to manage the implications of the Covid-19 situation. I realise it is a difficult time for staff, students and parents. As you would expect the school is receiving daily updates from the DfE, other UK government organisations and BCP Council and we adhere to the government's guidance as it develops regarding hygiene and infection control, school events and trips, and attendance.

At the time of writing the UK Government is keeping schools open as part of its national strategy. The DfE's current advice is for all children who are free of potential Covid-19 symptoms, and otherwise well, to attend school as normal. The advice continues at present to state that children with symptoms of temperature above 37.8 degrees or a new, persistent cough, should remain off-school as part of self-isolating for 7 days (obviously excluding any other illnesses which might normally lead to a child staying at home unwell). The government also advise the public that a number of underlying health issues should be taken into account in an individual's decision-making. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office also advise that anyone recently returned from certain countries should self-isolate, including children. The latest advice from the DfE and the FCO can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>  
and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus#foreign--commonwealth-office-fco-travel-advice>

Whilst it is understandable that individual parents want to contact the school for advice on whether to keep their child off school, we are not able to offer advice on each individual case. The decision is one for parents to make, informed by the UK government advice and guidance which at present is that children should attend school as normal if they don't meet any of the criteria for remaining at home. In the event your son or daughter is off school, please use the normal absence reporting email [attendance@highcliffeschool.com](mailto:attendance@highcliffeschool.com) or phone number 01425 282337 to inform us if it is a) self-isolation for the above Covid-19 symptoms b) any other illness c) any other reason. Thank you for your support on this.

Please note that as the school is open for learning we cannot respond to individual requests to set work if a child is kept out of school by parents/carers or is otherwise off school. Whilst school continues to be open staff will continue to teach lessons and set home study. Absent students can access this homestudy and the range of additional online learning platforms we use but will not receive bespoke study packages. These can be accessed by students at <https://my.highcliffe.school/onlineresources>.

We are planning for the possibility of school closure, as are all UK schools. In the event of school closure an education will be maintained, albeit on a reduced basis, through MyHighcliffe (which has been upgraded by our IT Services Team so work can be uploaded by students back to teachers); our online platforms such as MathsWatch; and some additional interactivity will be available through the use of Microsoft Teams software. As you would expect, priority will be given to students preparing for GCSE, A Level and BTEC examinations in the summer, although education will be provided for all

age groups. In the event the school is closed more detailed information regarding the arrangements for maintaining reduced educational provision will be published to parents and students.

Thank you once again for working in partnership with us at this challenging time.

Yours faithfully



**Patrick Earnshaw**  
**Headteacher**