



King Henry VIII Senior School  
Warwick Road  
Coventry  
CV3 6AQ

Headmaster: Jason Slack BSc, MA Ed

17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent,

The situation we currently face is clearly a 'once in a generation' event and a crisis on an international scale. Following yesterday's Government announcements, I thought it necessary to write to explain the current plans at King Henry VIII School. We seek to be controlled, considered and compassionate as we pull together, as a community, in these unprecedented times. Our top priority is to keep pupils, staff and all other members of our community safe while doing what we can to keep providing the best education we can.

### **Control**

The situation is changing by the day though the Government is, thus far, resisting significant pressure to advise schools to close.

We are focussing on what we can control and now moving apace in ensuring that our community is better protected and able to deal with whatever the situation throws at us. We seek to work together – staff, pupils and their families – and will be here to support pupils in their education over the coming weeks.

The Leadership teams across the Foundation continue to work through solutions to issues as they arise. There are regular updates to staff within the School.

We already have staff (and pupils) who are self-isolating now for fourteen days - we will do all we can to keep learning going in those classes. Much cover is required; some of our 'go-to' cover staff are retired teachers and are, understandably, less keen to undertake this work at present. It is anticipated that staff absence (as well as pupil absence) will increase in the coming days as the consequences of the new self isolation guidelines take effect. You would anticipate that we are prioritising the teaching of classes in Years 11 and 13 who have external examinations. Please bear with us if there is more cover teaching than we would normally have.

The concern about public examinations is understandable. Ofqual (the regulatory body for the examination boards) are being somewhat vague but have publicly stated that they are working with the boards to have contingency measures in place. I'll keep you informed but, in the meantime, you may like to see what they have written.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/updated-statement-on-coronavirus>

## **Health**

Please put the health of your son or daughter first and also consider our community – keep them at home for at least fourteen days, if they have a new, persistent cough or temperature. All members of a household with someone showing signs of the virus must also self-isolate.

We will take immediate steps if any of our pupils or staff fall ill and will do our best to support them through this situation.

May I advise that you encourage your son or daughter to heed only the advice from Public Health England and, in the case of educational matters, the School. We all know that, while the internet is a fantastic resource, there is much 'fake news', scaremongering and mischief-making which can alarm young people as well as creating unnecessary tension at an already tricky time. Please be responsible in your own use of social media.

## **Year 7 Parents' Evening**

Unfortunately, the Parents' Evening planned for Year 7 this coming Thursday has been postponed. I hope that parents will understand the reasoning. Staff will endeavour to contact parents individually with any particular concerns. However, please consider the progress of your child to be at least good if no contact is made. A Grade Card will be sent home at the end of this term.

## **Sports**

All sports fixtures are currently cancelled.

There has been much guidance from various sports governing bodies advising against matches and game play. As a result, all after school sporting practices have been cancelled. Mr Fitt and the PE Department are putting together a program of fitness and non contact activity that will run at lunchtimes so that pupils can benefit from some exercise.

PE lessons and Games lessons will be modified to include more recreational games and the reduced opportunity for contact, avoiding match scenarios.

## **Music and Drama**

Music and Drama rehearsals will continue as scheduled. You will be aware that concerts have been cancelled for the rest of this term. However, the opportunity to do some music and drama is always well received by pupils and contributes to a positive outlook in uncertain times.

## **Trips and Duke of Edinburgh's Award**

Teachers running individual trips will contact the relevant parents involved. The guidance from the Government was not helpful in this regard as to what 'essential travel' means. However, it is likely that all trips in the coming weeks will be cancelled. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions over the Easter period are cancelled.

## **Educational Contingency**

We have been running 'drop in' training sessions for pupils on how to access and use 'Microsoft Teams'. Please encourage your child to access this system. If your child is absent then work, where possible, will be posted on this system. Please be aware that staff are teaching normal lessons in school as well as trying to post work on Microsoft Teams, where possible. They are working very hard in challenging circumstances and will do their best to supply work to all pupils.

The most recent guidelines from the government can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Thank you for all of your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Slack".

J. Slack  
Headmaster