



Saint Felix School

Headmaster: Mr James Harrison BA (Hons)

17th March 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your continued understanding and support in respect of the evolving situation with COVID-19. The situation is fluid and fast moving and since I wrote to you last week, the Government's position has moved from 'contain' to 'delay'. Given the unprecedented nature of this situation, we are working hard to monitor all guidance from the various health and education bodies so that we remain informed and able to make decisions that are considered and proportionate. We will offer regular briefings as the guidance is changing so rapidly.

School remaining open: Yesterday the DfE wrote to all schools advising categorically that current advice remains in place - **no education or children's social care setting should close unless advised to do so by Public Health England.** Saint Felix therefore has to remain open.

Social Distancing:

- Open Morning which was scheduled for Saturday 21st March will be cancelled; I cannot risk individuals external to the school visiting us at this time.
- We have reflected on this at length and have decided that it is proportionate for us to cancel all sports fixtures with other schools with immediate effect.
- We have also unfortunately decided that the Prep Department production of the Lion King JR will be postponed for the time being. We will inform you when we feel the time is right for this production to be staged.
- We have also decided that, with immediate effect, all parents' evenings in Clough and Bronte will be postponed. Similarly, Star Assembly and Prep/Pre-Prep Chapel will go ahead without parents present.
- It is impossible to think that the ski trip to Andorra has any chance of occurring and the Bursar will contact parents separately this week regarding this trip. He is currently liaising with the travel company and anticipates a decision from them regarding refunds soon.



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Travel: You will have seen from the news over the weekend that a number of countries are changing their contingency plans, particularly those in Europe. I think it pertinent to note that although each country has its own unique circumstances, we must consider the advice given to us by the UK Government.

The DfE and Public Health England have very recently published updated travel guidance for the education sector - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/covid-19-travel-guidance-for-the-education-sector>. The main points are that the Government has advised against all overseas trips for children under 18 years old until further notice, but that this advice doesn't apply to school trips planned within the UK. However, I have made the decision to cancel all existing UK trips from today and the school will not be organising any more until we feel it safe to do so.

Exams: Ofqual has provided the following statement – <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/updated-statement-on-coronavirus>

Continuity of education: We are putting effort into preparing online material for any child that is unable to attend school. The teaching staff are, at present, putting together lessons for students should the need arise to deliver off-site education, in the event of an enforced closure. The lessons will be accessible for senior students via our Virtual Learning Platform: CANVAS, which will enable students to access and submit work they have completed. In the meantime, we will be minimising extracurricular activities throughout the school to maximise teaching time for examination subjects.

Self-isolation: Please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>. The symptoms for COVID-19 include a persistent cough, a high temperature (above 37.8°C or 100°F) and/or a shortness of breath. Respiratory secretions produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes containing the virus are most likely to be the main means of transmission. It is very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or food. Viruses like coronavirus cannot live outside the body for very long.

Today, the Department for Education and Public Health England have issued updated guidance for education settings on COVID-19:

- Staff, young people and children should stay at home if they are unwell with a **new**, continuous cough or a high temperature to avoid spreading infection to others. Otherwise they should attend education or work as normal;
- If staff, young people or children become unwell on site with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature they should be sent home;
- Clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces more often than usual using your standard cleaning products;
- Supervise young children to ensure they wash their hands for 20 seconds more often than usual with soap and water or hand sanitiser and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues.



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If self-isolating:

DO

- Stay at home
- Try to keep at least 2 metres (3 steps) from other people in your home, particularly older people or those with long-term health conditions
- Separate yourself from other people – this includes other family members
- Only allow people who live with you to stay
- Stay in a well-ventilated room with a window that can be opened
- Clean toilets and bathrooms regularly – think about a bathroom rota
- Use separate towels from anyone else in the household
- Drink plenty of water and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol, to help with your symptoms
- You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 to 14 days. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

DO NOT

- Invite visitors to your home
- Do not go to school, work or public areas
- Do not use public transport
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, towels, bedding with other people in your home

New guidance from the Prime Minister stated that if any person in your household has a persistent cough or fever, everyone living there must stay at home for 14 days and so I respectfully ask that if any child is suffering from these symptoms that they are kept at home for at least 14 days. We would be grateful if you would inform Reception if your child is going to be absent.

We will continue to communicate with you and to update you with further information as we receive it. Please be sympathetic as I often receive information on government advice and policy at the same time as you do! We are fortunate to have a committee of experienced professionals, chaired by Dr John Kelly and comprising myself, the Deputy Head, the Bursar, the Head of the Medical Centre, the Head of Prep and the Governor in charge of the oversight of Health and Safety. We are communicating several times per day and meet formally on Friday mornings. The Health of our pupils and staff is more important than any commercial, financial and even educational aims of the organisation and no risks will be taken.

If you do have any concerns or questions, please email my PA ctansley@stfelix.co.uk

Best wishes,

James Harrison
Headmaster