

GAE/RW/SC

26 February 2020

Dear Parents

We continue to monitor carefully the international and local situation with regard to the coronavirus. However, further to my previous letter (copied below), we now need to update you based on the latest information provided by Public Health England. All our previous requirements on travel and quarantine remain in place and we are grateful to boarding parents who accepted our advice, where necessary, for their child not to return home at half term. I understand how difficult this must have been for the children and their families involved.

We must expect that pupils living in South-East Asia might not be able to travel at the end of term, in April, and must also consider that some other countries might also be affected. Anyone choosing to travel is advised that restrictions could well be in place before they return, making it essential that those in examination classes **MUST** organise to remain in the UK during the Easter break.

We will, of course, actively support all those whose plans have been compromised by the current situation, and we are particularly aware of the impact of enforced separation on boarders and their families. Where applicable, we will have appropriate conversations with parents and pupils about their plans so that the best advice can be given to each individual family.

We must ensure that all boarders are protected both in school and outside school. There have been isolated reports in the national UK press of children being targeted outside school on the basis of their ethnicity, and a perceived link to the virus. We have put in place steps to ensure boarders are protected when outside school, which includes expecting them not to leave school on their own. Robust measures will also be taken, as always, to respond in the unlikely event that there is any associated bullying within school.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) continue to advise against all travel to Hubei Province and all but essential travel to mainland China. This advice does not yet extend to Hong Kong, Macao, other countries in that region or Northern Italy, but several countries have put additional screening measures and restrictions in place. The advice makes it clear that anyone travelling to certain countries must be prepared for additional control measures and for the fact that travel is being curtailed or disrupted because of airline cancellations, particularly to and from Hong Kong. The picture is changing dynamically and we are regularly checking FCO advice and Public Health England for any relevant information.



If a parent decides to require their child to travel, we must make it clear that anyone returning from China or any other region of the world considered 'high risk' will be required to spend a period of 14 days in the UK before returning to school, and should self-isolate during this time. Additionally, we have been advised to take a similar action for Hong Kong and it is very possible that this will need to be extended to other countries. Our belief is that guardians are highly unlikely to be able to offer guardianship under such circumstances, which might make the organisation of their return very difficult.

The College has to take reasonable measures to protect staff and pupils. We can advise pupils not to leave but we do not have the right to prevent any pupil from travelling home. Any measures that we put in place will be reasonable. If a parent visits their child for the whole Easter holiday, for example, and has displayed no symptoms before the end of the holiday, current health protection guidance indicates that such a person is beyond the incubation period and does not represent a risk.

We will continue to liaise with you and update you with further information as we receive it. In the meantime, I would ask you to consider your child's Easter plans as soon as possible and let us know how you wish to proceed. For pupils in examination year groups, Years 13 and 11, we do insist that they make arrangements with a Guardian to remain in the United Kingdom. For overseas pupils from China, Hong Kong and Thailand in Years 9, 10 and 12, we strongly advise that arrangements are made NOT to go home and that a Guardian is engaged for the holiday period. I would like to reiterate that, nearer the time, any pupil that has returned home may be required to self-isolate for 14 days after their arrival in the UK, if their home country has been identified as a high risk region.

Please do not hesitate to liaise with Mr Cashell, Mrs Thomas or directly with your child's Houseparents' if you have any questions, wish to discuss the matter further or require any support in making your child's arrangements.

Kind regards



**Guy Emmett**  
Headmaster