

12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

**RE: School contingency planning for Coronavirus**

Having met with the senior staff and considered all factors carefully, we feel that it is important to make the wider school community aware of the steps that we are taking to prepare for potential school closure due to Covid-19. This information is covered in the attached question and answer sheet which we hope that you find helpful.

At the heart of our planning is the health and safety of our students. We are also mindful of the impact on students' learning, particularly those with major exams approaching. If the school does close then it will be the result of government guidance or as the result of assessment made by the school leadership team that the level of risk at that time is unacceptable.

**If at any point the decision is made to close the school this information will be displayed on the front of the school website and we will also send messages out via ParentMail**

Whilst we are not able to plan for every eventuality please be assured that we are working hard so that if things do worsen nationally we are absolutely prepared.

Yours sincerely



Dr Rowland Speller  
Headteacher

## Covid-19 Questions and Answers

### **Q. What is school doing to encourage personal hygiene**

Students are being reminded of national guidance around hand washing and avoiding unnecessary personal contact such as shaking hands. Our premises staff are regularly checking toilets so that there is always soap available. Hand sanitisers are in key locations around the school also with members of the school community being encouraged to use them by staff.

### **Q. Will planned overseas school trips within the next three months take place?**

It is looking increasingly unlikely that overseas trips involving staff and students will take place. The level of risk is unacceptable, even if we were to follow Public Health England advice. This is because the situation is changing so quickly, and there is a risk not only associated with illness but also with the operational capacity of the school were students and staff expected to self-isolate on their return.

### **Q. What is the school doing to reduce community gatherings?**

We are reviewing the school calendar and seeking to cancel any community gatherings which can be delayed or conducted through alternative means. This may mean that some evening events are cancelled and moved to later in the school year. Equally we will seek to limit school events that place heavy reliance on visitors to the school or require students to travel to other sites.

### **Q. In the event of further spread of Covid-19 will the school close? When might this happen?**

The safety of the children and everyone associated with The Abbey School is foremost in our planning. We are taking daily consideration of the most recent advice from Public Health England, The Department for Education and the Local Authority with regard to the virus. It is also clear that the spread of Covid-19 is happening rapidly and there is an increasing inevitability that schools will be closed at some point. Given this context, we are taking an extremely cautious approach and we may choose to close the school ahead of government instruction should we feel at any point the level of risk to our school community is unacceptable due to an escalation of cases in the local area.

### **Q. If the school were to close what are staff doing to support my child learning from home?**

Should the school be forced to close we have been working with our subject teachers to ensure that there is a bank of learning available via the VLE. This will include:

- Learning resources for each year group
- Exam questions and practice papers for those approaching public exams
- GCSE Pod learning platform for Years 9, 10 and 11
- Updated subject area microsites

Whilst none of the above is an ideal replacement for normal school teaching it is an attempt to mitigate the impact on learning. Subject staff would be contactable via the school email system should there be queries about aspects of learning or revision from students. They will attempt to respond within a reasonable time-frame.

### **Q. My child has important exams approaching. What can I do as a parent to reduce the impact of school closure on their exam performance?**

There are several steps that parents can take to support the school during this difficult time:

- If your home address, telephone number or contact details have recently changed please ensure that the school has the most up-to date copy of these so that regular contact can be maintained during school closure
- Check that you have a record of when your child's public exam dates are and encourage your child to form a revision plan
- If there are any resources that your child may need in order to study from home including stationery, worksheets, revision guides it would be better to buy these now rather than waiting.
- Check that your child knows how to access past exam papers and mark-schemes from exam board websites, or from the VLE, as appropriate. They should know how to self assess their work. Teaching staff

will not be able to answer the same level of queries from students as would be the case if the school were open.

#### **Q. I don't have a computer at home. How can my child access learning resources in the event of closure?**

In a small number of cases it may be possible to send resources home via traditional mail, assuming that the postal service is still operational. This will be dependent also on staff capacity within school.

Resources are also available through several apps that students can access on their mobile phones and other devices, such as iPads and tablets – see below for examples:

#### **Q. Will public exam dates change?**

If your child has public exams rapidly approaching you will naturally be concerned about whether their exam dates will be affected. At this stage the exams boards are planning for the dates to remain as currently planned. If there is the need for changes we will inform parents of this and arrange for staffing to invigilate the revised dates.

#### **Accessing the VLE:**

The Parent Portal enables you to view homework and/or assignments that your child's teacher has set, you can also view your child's timetable. The Parent Portal can be accessed via any Web browser or by using the MyFrog App on a mobile device or Frog Learn App on a tablet.

#### **How to Sign-up**

1. In a web browser, browse to <https://vle.abbey.kent.sch.uk>
2. Click on the **Forgot Password** link on the login page.
3. Enter your email address and click **Submit**.
4. You will receive an email with a link to reset your password, please click this link. *(if you receive an error, please confirm your email address with the school office.)*
5. Make a note of your **username** it will be displayed in bold, then choose a password then click **Reset Password**.
6. You will now be able to log in to the Parent Portal using the above link or from the External Links menu on our [school website](#).

#### **MyFrog App for Mobile Devices**

My Frog is a mobile app for the things you do every day, with push notifications. Students can hand-in work and complete quizzes. Parents can view their child's homework and timetable.

The app is available from both the AppStore and PlayStore.



[Download MyFrog from the Apple App Store](#) or [Download MyFrog from Google Play](#)

You will require the schools VLE web address to log in, the address is **[vle.abbey.kent.sch.uk](https://vle.abbey.kent.sch.uk)**

For technical support please contact the Abbey School I.T. Support Department via email: [itsupport@abbeychoolfaversham.co.uk](mailto:itsupport@abbeychoolfaversham.co.uk)