



from Tom Lawson MA (Oxon), Headmaster

11 March 2020

Interim update – Covid-19

Dear Parents,

Since our last letter, there has been no formal change in advice except to add most of Italy to the list of category 1 areas that require quarantine on return even without symptoms. Given the situation in Italy, we would advise against any travel there at this time and, indeed, St Andrew's Prep has cancelled its imminent ski trip. Parents of pupils involved have been written to in fuller detail.

This interim email, however, contains some useful information to help answer the questions people have been raising over recent days and hopefully provide reassurance given the increasing worrying speculation about Covid-19 in the news.

With regard to holiday travel, the restrictions on re-entry to the school remain defined by category 1 and 2 on the [Public Health England website](#). At this point, we do not know whether other countries will have severe outbreaks and move into a different category. If they do, this may affect the ability to return to school immediately, either because of flight or travel restrictions or because of quarantine requirements. It is possible that the spread in the UK will affect outbound travel. At this point in time the risk level in the UK is relatively low but over the next week or two the number of cases might rise. We will keep you updated and do our best to reassure pupils that sensible and safe decisions will be made. **Please could parents make sure that the school knows (via hsms at the College, via reception at St Andrew's) of all current travel plans so we can keep an accurate database and continue to support all families.**

Current UK advice is that schools should operate as normal although heightened hygiene is important. There are no confirmed cases of Covid-19 at Eastbourne College or St Andrew's Prep and the children at both schools are being reminded regularly about hygiene. It may be that government advice will change and **the schools are well prepared to ensure continuity of education through online provision** should we close for any period. Note that it is possible that even if day schools are asked to close, boarding schools may be asked to continue. **We will plan for all contingencies and communicate any changes clearly and promptly.**

As a precaution and to prepare for what might come, from today we ask that those in our community should:

- avoid unnecessary personal contact such as handshaking;
- wash their hands thoroughly in soap and water regularly and certainly before all meals;
- keep alert for symptoms (dry cough, temperature, shortness of breath);
- cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their sleeve (not hands) when they cough or sneeze and avoid touching the face with unwashed hands;
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash hands afterwards;
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell;
- if pupils have any symptoms, please call the GP and/or 111 (online), and contact the school medical centre for advice **before coming into school (day pupils, boarders at home)**. Boarders at school should stay in house and follow matron's advice.

For any further information or to report any concerns you may have that you are at greater risk, please contact the medical centre:

- Eastbourne College: [medical@eastbourne-college.co.uk](mailto:medical@eastbourne-college.co.uk)
- St Andrew's Prep: [medical@standrewsprep.co.uk](mailto:medical@standrewsprep.co.uk)

#### **Exams (GCSE, A-level, Common Entrance):**

Pupils have been very concerned about possible disruption to exams or exam preparation. We will put in place measures to ensure that pupils have access to the revision help they need in the lead up to the exams, even if they are at home. If the UK spread of the virus affects the exam periods themselves, then UK exam boards will make provisions to ensure pupils are not disadvantaged. Until the situation in May/June is known, the important thing is for pupils not to worry about the uncertainty and continue to prepare as normal.

We will continue to keep you informed. Thank you for the calm way with which you are dealing with uncertain times.

Tom NM Lawson  
Headmaster, Eastbourne College

Gareth EB Jones  
Headmaster, St Andrew's Prep