

Thursday, 12th March 2020

Re: Important information

Dear Parents,

To ensure you are informed, please read the following notices.

Coronavirus

At the time of writing there is no specific Covid-19 concern relating to More House School. The school is committed to maintaining its support of our pupils' education whilst taking all reasonable precautions to protect all in our community from the virus.

Daily government updates received by the school continue to inform our planning and our practices around preventing the spread of germs. The school's cleaning and hygiene processes have been strengthened, and particular areas of focus for intensive cleansing are addressed as priorities. Pupils are receiving very frequent reminders of the importance of thorough and frequent handwashing, using soap. Any potential indicators of threat will be reported immediately to Public Health England (PHE), and their expert advice followed.

Please discuss with your son the importance of hand-hygiene. The following link is helpful:

<https://youtu.be/bQCP7waTRWU>.

For the latest government information regarding the virus, and advice relating to protecting yourself and your family, and relating to travel, please use the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

It is quite possible that at some point in the coming days or weeks, the school may find itself in a position where it must close temporarily. This is in common with all schools where a school-based, or local regional threat. We will not make such a decision in isolation, but will do so in consultation with PHE.

In such a circumstance, the school will contact all parents, by email and by SMS (text message) at the earliest opportunity. Updates will also be provided on the website. Many of our pupils travel long distances home from school, and arrangements will be in place to supervise pupils until such a time as their parents are able to make arrangements for them to be collected. However, if parents receive a message of school closure, it will be necessary for such arrangements to be made immediately, such that pupils are collected as swiftly as possible.

The school will remain closed only for as short a period of time as permitted by PHE. Typically this may be for two days in order to provide sufficient opportunity for a deep-clean of all areas before pupils and staff may be safely readmitted.

Curriculum continuity

During such school closure, we aim to continue to support all pupils' educational progress through online teaching and learning.

Please open **and save** the attached document which provides you with access links to a platform where your son's teachers will upload teaching material and instructions for specific learning activities, according to your son's school timetable for that day.

At the time of writing that platform is not populated with resources – resources will only be uploaded on the day of school closure, so that your son can log-in and access the lessons that match his timetable for the day. Please bear in mind that, in the event of closure, your son's teachers will receive a similar period of notice that you will receive, and there may be a short delay whilst teachers travel home, log-in, and begin to upload material. Those classes preparing for public examinations over the coming weeks will be the first priority in terms of uploading material.

Despite there being no population of resources currently published on the platform, I ask that parents test their relevant link from the attached document now, so that any access-problems can be identified in advance of a closure.

Please remember to save the document with the links so that you can find it readily should school closure occur.

Remote teaching and learning will always limit the opportunities available to our pupils. It is important that we all do our best to ensure that our children's education is disrupted as little as possible, and I ask everyone to continue to promote good hand and respiratory hygiene:

- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your coughs or sneezes, then bin the tissue and wash your hands (or use a sanitiser gel).
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

If anyone within your family begins to experience symptoms associated with the Coronavirus, or comes into close contact with someone showing symptoms, it is your duty to contact NHS 111 immediately to report, and to seek advice.

End of term

Unnecessary gatherings of many people are not sensible in the current circumstances. It is therefore necessary that we make changes to our normal end of the Lent term.

Please note that this year there will be no Spring Fayre on the last day of this term (Friday, 27th March 2020), and no parents or other visitors can be invited to attend the school's Easter service. I realise that for many this will be a great disappointment, and I am sorry that such alterations must be implemented. I apologise especially to The Friends, for the cancellation of their chocolate Easter-egg tombola.

Therefore, on Friday, 27th March, normal form-time and lessons will take place in the morning. There will be an internal Easter service attended by pupils and the staff only, before school closes for the Easter holidays at 12.30pm. Pupils should therefore be collected by their parents, or other transport, at 12.30pm on Friday, 27th March (this finish time is the same as previously published). Please note there will be no post-service lunch. For boys who are registered for using the coach

transport to the railway station, the coach will depart from Main Reception at 12.30pm. Transport to Farnham railway station for boarders will also be provided where required.

Junior Years' Project Assemblies

There will be no parental performances of the junior boys' end-of-term project assemblies before the Easter holidays, due to the measures in place to reduce the risk of the spread of the Coronavirus. The junior school staff intend to reschedule these assemblies for later in the school year, and will communicate a new date to parents sometime in the Trinity (summer) term.

Roadworks

In my letter to parents during the February half-term, I provided some advance warning of roadworks planned in the immediate vicinity of the school. Timings for these roadworks have appeared changeable, but I am now able to confirm that we have received confirmation this week that those roadworks will start next week, commencing on Monday, 16th March.

On Monday, 16th March and for a period of up to four weeks, temporary traffic-lights will be in operation on Moons Hill, and on Hamlash Lane.

From Monday, 23rd March, Kennel Lane will be closed for up to four weeks.

Please be aware that these planned works, necessary apparently for the replacement of the gas-main pipes, is likely to cause significant travel disruption close to the school site.

Safe Air

Please remind yourself, and anyone who drives your son to or from school, that the school asks all drivers to switch off their vehicles' engines whilst waiting for any length of time in the school's car-parks. Over the coming days our younger pupils will be learning more about air-pollution and its impact on physical and mental health. Year Nine pupils will also be studying this topic in their flexi-Friday next week. I seek the consistent support of all drivers in protecting our children and staff from the harmful exhaust fumes of so many vehicles.

Lavatory Facilities

I have been grateful to parents and taxi-drivers for their adherence to the timings for accessing the main body of the site – especially to access the visitors' lavatory - during the afternoons, following my letter at half-term in February. As an update, we anticipate the imminent installation of a lavatory facility for drivers and visitors in the gravel car-park, close to the lower-entrance. This will be accessible from earlier, providing a facility close to the car-park for those travelling longer distances.

Mornings

Please remember that supervision of day boys commences from 8.10am in the mornings. The school does not supervise the playground before that time, and pupils should not be delivered to the school site before 8.10am.

Afternoon Collections

Please continue to observe the timings for accessing the site from the car-park in the afternoons, waiting until 4.15pm on Mondays to Thursdays before walking up from the car-park; and until 3.55pm on Fridays.

Parent Access

Please also remember that no parent or other adult not employed by More House School, may enter any school building unless accompanied by a member of the staff. Parents are asked, therefore, not to walk into Gard'ner House for any reason, unless specifically invited to do so. Again, I am very grateful for your cooperation and support as we seek to promote the safeguarding and wellbeing of all pupils.

Staff News

On our return from the Lent half-term holiday, we welcomed Miss Lea Adkins to the academic staff, as a new teacher within our Social Sciences department.

As we reach the Easter holidays, Mrs Richards, Head of Drama and Head of Year Nine, will commence her maternity leave. We wish the family happiness and good health. During her absence, Mrs Richard's Drama classes will be taught by Miss Mimi Valentine and Miss Julia Collington. Mrs Erin Easdown will assume the role of Head of Year Nine.

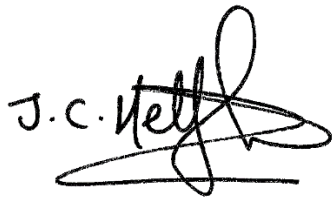
We extend a warm welcome to our new Head of English, Miss Anabel Flamank, who joins More House at the start of the Trinity term. She brings with her a wealth of expertise and experience. I have been especially grateful to Mrs Impey who has provided such strong and consistent English teaching and form-tutoring during the period since Michaelmas half.

We also look forward to the return from maternity leave of our permanent School Chaplain, Mrs Teresa Ndlovu. Her cover has been very ably provided by Dr Martin Wright, who will remain at More House until the summer holidays, and is continuing to provide History teaching in years Seven, Eight and Nine.

Mr Bloomfield

My colleagues and I have been warmed by the many messages of sympathy and condolence received by the school following the announcement on Tuesday of Mr Bloomfield's unexpected passing. Thank you for your support of the school and, especially, of your sons at this very difficult time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.C. Hetherington'. The signature is stylized with a large loop at the end and a horizontal line underneath.

Jonathan C. Hetherington BA (Hons) MSc (Ed) QTS
Headmaster