



11 March 2020

Dear parent/carer

At the time of writing, there have been no confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) within our academy or within the Diverse Academies Trust more widely. However, we want to assure you that we are monitoring the situation closely.

What is the current risk level?

The UK Chief Medical Officers state the [risk to the public remains moderate, however the risk to individuals is low](#).

A government 'Cobra' meeting took place on Monday 9 March, at which it was stated that the UK would remain in the 'Containment' phase of the response to the coronavirus outbreak.

There is no immediate plan to close schools nationally, however this position may change should the government move to the 'Delay' phase – the aim of which would be, in part, to delay the peak of the outbreak until the warmer months, which can reduce significantly the risk of overlapping with seasonal flu and other challenges (societal or medical) that the colder months bring.

The government is currently expected to hold another Cobra meeting on Thursday 12 March.

What does this mean for our academy?

At present, our academy will continue to operate as normal, however we are preparing for a range of possible scenarios.

We are keen to remind all our students, staff, and visitors of the importance of good hygiene – in particular, regular hand washing. We have also distributed additional supplies of hand sanitisers across the academy. Please support us by encouraging your child, and family members, to follow this advice at all times.

The NHS's dedicated webpage provides a wealth of information, including what the symptoms of coronavirus are, how the virus is spread and what you can do to avoid catching or spreading germs. See: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

What happens if a parent/carer, child, member of staff or visitor tests positive for coronavirus?

If there is a confirmed case of coronavirus amongst our academy community, we will immediately undertake a risk assessment and follow advice from the Public Health England local Health Protection Team. A decision on whether it is necessary to close will be based on this assessment and the decision communicated to all parents and carers immediately.



What will happen if the academy closes?

In the event of a partial or whole-school closure, we will communicate to you again with any specific arrangements as a result. We are likely to use our academy website, email, text and/or PARS Insight to distribute learning resources and work that students can do from home, where possible.

In preparation for a closure we are:

- ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of our students is core to our decision-making
- reviewing staff-student ratios in the event of significant staff absences, to support the continuation of teaching and learning where possible
- considering the impact of students with prolonged absence and the potential need for support plans
- monitoring situations where individuals within our academy community are suspected of having contracted coronavirus, including observing the need to self-isolate where appropriate and/or advised to do so
- and keeping up to date with the latest government advice.

We should have two points of parent/carer contact information for your child – this should include an email address and phone number (preferably a mobile number). If this requires updating please let us know. For GDPR purposes you must do this in writing, therefore please email us at parents@tuxford-ac.org.uk or provide us with a hardcopy written letter.

If you do not have internet access at home, please inform us, and we will endeavour to provide hardcopy resources where feasible.

Trips and travel abroad

Within our academy we have a number of trips planned. If your child is due to take part on one or more of these trips, please be aware of the following:

- The responsibility for consent to travel must be given by the child's parent or guardian. You will have already signed a consent form, however, given the rapidly changing position of the coronavirus outbreak, you will be asked to sign a further consent form close to or on the day of the departure. This final consent form will detail the associated risks known at the time of travel.
- We are regularly reviewing the risk assessments for all trips. This includes reviewing staffing ratios and plans in the event of travel curtailment. We are also taking advice from a range of bodies such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the local authority and our insurers.

If you and/or your family are planning a trip abroad, please ensure you are aware of the current advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office **before** you depart. See: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

For returning travellers who have visited areas affected by coronavirus, please see the government's advice: www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public#returning-travellers.

Please note that these webpages are regularly updated and so it is important you check the information frequently.



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Helpline

The Department for Education have launched a helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows.

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours – 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

If you are worried about any symptoms, please call NHS 111. Please let us know if you or any member of your immediate family have a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 at the earliest opportunity.

Yours faithfully,
Mr Hardy, Principal

