



05 March 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I am writing to you regarding the ongoing media stories and local school closures in the Torbay area, to inform you of the advice we have been given about Coronavirus.

As a school, we need to follow the advice of the Local Authority and Public Health England, from whom we are receiving both daily communication about what is happening, and school advice on what to do if we have concerns or suspected cases.

The government has provided specific guidance for educational settings and importantly it states that: "If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case in a childcare or educational setting, no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for COVID-19 are awaited. There is no need to close the setting or send other learners or staff home." If there was a confirmed case at the school, Public Health would contact us and we would follow their instructions.

We will continue to monitor the daily updates and will respond to the information and guidance if it changes. Section 6 of the guidance states: "The childcare or educational setting will be contacted by the local Public Health England Health Protection Team to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. An assessment of each childcare or education setting will be undertaken by the Health Protection Team with relevant staff. Advice on the management of pupils or students and staff will be based on this assessment."

I can confirm that at present there is no reason to close the school; any school closure would be as a result of direct guidance from Public Health and the Local Authority. There is clear information from Public Health England regarding hygiene and prevention, which we are sharing with all staff and students. For example, we will be showing the following video, [BBC News Round](#), in tutor time over the coming days and we have moved to a no handshaking policy for visitors and parents at parents' evening.

As we are receiving such regular updates and guidance, please be assured that we will promptly share any changes to the advice given. Communication will be via email as well as posts on our website and social media to ensure that all stakeholders are fully aware.

With regards to public examinations and coursework completion, we are in regular contact with the exam boards and should there be any changes, we will communicate the advice in a timely manner.

However currently, for us and our school community, it is very much business as usual.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Kind regards

Emma Dixon

Deputy Principal

South Dartmoor Community College