

Ilkley Grammar School

Sent: 05/11/2020 15:42:38
Message Type: Email
Subject: On behalf of Mrs Purnell: National Restrictions Update AND
Emergency Closure Procedures

Dear Parents/carers,

Yesterday afternoon, the DfE published [guidance](#) for schools regarding the national restrictions which take effect from today, 5th November. I have selected the key points to share with you as follows:

Clinically extremely vulnerable - children

- Children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend education whilst the national restrictions are in place. Students will learn remotely for the duration of the national restrictions.
- Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend education.

The DfE have stated that **most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable are no longer identified as such**. Understandably, this change has caused some confusion and we would encourage parents, if you have not already done so, to speak to your GP or specialist clinician, as soon as possible, to understand if your child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school whilst the advice is in place. If this is the case, we would ask that you inform school so we can code absence accurately.

Clinically extremely vulnerable – staff

- Individuals who are clinically extremely vulnerable have been advised to work from home and not to go into work. This affects a very small number of IGS staff who will work remotely during the lockdown period.
- The guidance states that all other staff should continue to attend work, including those living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable.

Clinically vulnerable staff and children

- Staff and children who are clinically vulnerable or have underlying health conditions but are not clinically extremely vulnerable, are expected to continue to attend school in line with current guidance.

Out-of-school activities

- Out of school activities including extra-curricular should close for face-to-face provision for the duration of the national restrictions.

Face Coverings

- Face coverings must be worn by adults and students (unless medically exempt) in all schools when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This is the same as the guidance for schools in areas with local restrictions which we have followed since the start of term.
- Face coverings must be worn by pupils in year 7 and above when travelling on dedicated school transport to secondary school or college.
- Children and young people aged 11 and over must wear a face covering on public transport.

Music, dance & drama

- Music, dance and drama can be undertaken in school so long as safety precautions are undertaken. Advice is provided in the [full opening guidance for schools](#).

Sport

- Schools must only provide team sports listed on the [return to recreational team sport framework](#). Competition between different schools or colleges should not take place, in line with the wider restrictions on grassroots sport.
- Schools are able to work with external coaches, clubs and organisations for *curricular* activities where they are satisfied that it is safe to do so.

National Restrictions – General Guidance

Given the introduction of national restrictions, there are implications for students when they are arriving and leaving school, as well as for post-16 students leaving the site during the school day. A link to the relevant part of the guidance can be found [here](#).

Whilst a separate communication is being sent to students directly, we would appreciate if you could reinforce the following:

- When arriving at or leaving school, **the national guidance now states that this should be in pairs only and not in groups of more than two.**
- Students should only use Tesco and other food shops/supermarkets before and after the school day for buying ‘**essential items**’; in addition, they must respect and follow all guidance they have in place.

It is not easy to get 2000 people on and off a single site without some degree of gathering and it is understood that it will naturally take some time for students to disperse at the end of the school day. This is why we have staggered the start and end of the day and, whilst it does make a difference, it does require students to not congregate and to separate as per the guidance as soon as it is possible to do so.

We do appreciate that some students find the contradiction between the circumstances allowed in schools and the restrictions which apply to them when they leave the site difficult to understand. They are allowed in year group or band bubbles in school but are limited to pairs beyond the site. However, our out of school advice must be to follow the national guidelines and to respect the collective attempt of society to reduce the risk to the most vulnerable while maintaining the things that are considered essential such as the provision of basic needs and, importantly for us, education.

Given the full guidance was only published yesterday, we will also monitor things in school over the next couple of days. If there are any further adjustments required in school, we will let students know ready for Monday.

As you are aware, we already have a range of measures in place in school which work to manage the risks of COVID while ensuring that we continue to provide education. The routines we have developed in school such as staggered starts, finishes, breaks and lunchtimes, year group bubbles, the wearing of masks on corridors, one-way systems, the cleaning of tables and the use of sanitiser, are now well-established, and we appreciate students' continuing efforts to follow these routines. The overall atmosphere around school is extremely respectful and students should be commended for this.

We understand that there are no plans to move schools to tier 2 of the contain framework during the period of national restrictions. Tier 2 would involve secondary schools and colleges moving to rotas, with students alternating a fortnight attending and a fortnight at home.

Further Updates:

Catering:

- The long-awaited payment cards to replace the biometric system have now been printed with students' photographs and have arrived in school. These will now be set up to students' ParentPay accounts and should speed up the payment process at the tills. NB: When used, the card will display the photo of the student on the tills for verification process.
- We are hoping to have everything set up and run the final tests so the cards can be distributed by the end of next week.
- We will confirm when the cards have been distributed and the process for lost and replacement cards in due course

Emergency Closure Procedures:

Given that the weather is deteriorating, we want to take the opportunity to remind everyone of our school closure procedures, in case the school is severely affected by bad weather. We also want to ask you to take the opportunity to discuss these procedures with your child over the next few days, and let us know by return, if you do NOT wish your child to make their own way home in the event of an emergency closure – see below.

In the event of heavy overnight snowfall, or seriously icy conditions, we may be unable to safely open the school in the morning, and the Headteacher will decide whether or not to close school for the day by 7am at the latest, wherever possible. Please be assured that this decision will never be taken lightly, but we do have a particularly challenging site and the safety of students and staff will always be key to the decision. This decision will be posted on the

school and Bradford Schools Online websites and announced on local radio stations that morning. To support this procedure, a Schoolcomms will be sent to parent/carers and staff as soon as the decision has been made, along with updates being posted on the school's twitter feed: @ilkleygrammar. Please check these methods for updates throughout any closure period and be aware that it may not be possible for us to monitor the school main telephone line.

OTHER EMERGENCY CLOSURES (including for snow) DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

In the exceptional case that the school has to be closed in an emergency and at short notice, parents / carers will receive a Schoolcomms informing them of the closure, as well as information regarding whether or not the school buses will be able to run to take students home. Students will also be informed and given the opportunity to contact parents before leaving school.

To ensure that students are able to leave school in the event of an emergency closure, please can you make sure that your son/daughter knows how to get home using public transport, if necessary, and that he/she is able to access your house, or that of a relative or friend, in the event of an emergency.

N.B. Unless we are informed otherwise, we will assume that you give permission for your child to make their own way home, or to your alternative safe address, in the event of an emergency closure, and that you have discussed this with them, as per the above paragraph.

If you do NOT wish your child to leave school on their own in the event of an emergency closure, please complete this form [here](#) or telephone school on 01943 608424 to let us know as a matter of urgency, so that we can place a note on their file. No student will ever be left unsupervised in school, and where they can't get home safely, they will be supervised. Please make sure that your child is aware of these arrangements.

Finally, can I please take this opportunity to remind you to ensure that you have notified school if your contact details have recently changed?

Kind regards,

Carly Purnell
Headteacher

Please do not reply to this email address. Replies to this address are not monitored. If you wish to respond to this message or to contact the school by email please use the following email address: admin@ilkleygs.co.uk Thank you.