

25th March 2020

Dear Parents and Students

The past week has seen a huge change to the way we undertake our lives as we all work together to stop the spread of Coronavirus. As an Academy Community we are quickly adapting to a different way of learning, communicating and supporting each other. The way in which students, staff and parents have worked together so far has been exceptional and it is absolutely important this continues over the coming days and weeks.

I appreciate you will already have seen this information but I feel it is appropriate to remind ourselves of the restrictions the Government has now put in place and the reasons for these restrictions.

On Monday the Prime Minister announced restrictions we all must follow that are summarised below:

Full Guidance on Staying at Home and Away From Others (23rd March 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>

The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. That is why the Government has introduced three new measures.

- 1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes.*
- 2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces.*
- 3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public.*

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings. These measures came into effect on Monday 23 March. The Government will look again at these measures after three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

1. Staying at home

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons:

- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.*
- one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.*
- any medical need, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.*
- travelling to and from work, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.*

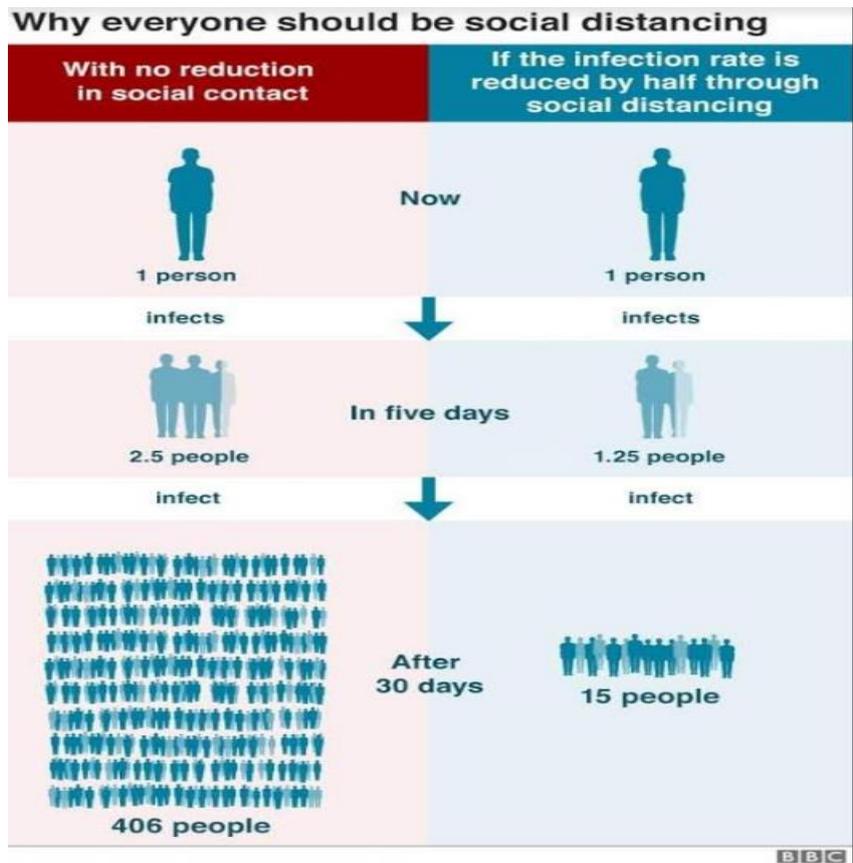
These four reasons are exceptions - even when doing these activities, you should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.

These measures must be followed by everyone.

As the spread of the virus accelerates and we face even more acute pressures as a society, I urge you to stay at home and support one another in doing so. **The message is clear 'Stay at Home and Save Lives'.**

I appreciate that we will be missing each other and this combined with nicer weather will mean we may be tempted to meet up with friends and socialise. I encourage you to adhere to the restrictions and avoid gathering in social groups.

The graphic below shows us the clear reality of why we must follow the Government restrictions relating to **Social Distancing**.



I am sure we will have many difficulties to face together in the coming days and weeks and the directives will, no doubt, change rapidly many times. We will keep communicating with you whenever it is needed.

We want to ensure we stay connected as a community over the coming weeks. Each week there will be a newsletter with updates for students and parents to ensure we are all positively coping as a community with the huge changes and different ways of working.

For those of you that are booked on Academy trips we are in discussions with providers to get a refund. As you can appreciate, the volume of cases across the country the trip providers are dealing with is extensive. We will endeavour to give parents and students who were scheduled to go on a trip an update as soon as possible. Many parents will have paid bus fare money up to April 3rd. This money will stay on your account as credit and once the school does open again we will communicate information regarding bus fare accounts.

I want to say a huge thank you to our fantastic staff. The way in which they have responded to the many recent changes has been absolutely incredible. I can only admire the commitment, resilience and expertise they have shown. Over the coming weeks they will continue to provide the best support possible for our students and families.

Finally, it goes without saying we are experiencing a crisis that none of us could ever have imagined. As an Academy, we will continue to be there to support you as best we can as we deal with this together. Stay safe and healthy.

With all best wishes

D Keogh
Principal