

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus update

First and foremost, I would like to start by extending my greatest thanks to all of my colleagues across our schools for their continued dedication and commitment at this time. The staff in your children's schools are working in the most challenging of circumstances at the moment in order to keep things going as best they can.

Secondly, I would like to thank you for your continued positive support and patience through this unusual time. A number of parents and carers have contacted me or our schools to express their thanks for what our schools are doing: I have not been able to respond to each of these directly but I would like you know that such gestures are greatly appreciated.

The overall position in terms of coronavirus remains just as it was in my letter of yesterday so it's not necessary to restate that here. However, I think it is important for parents to understand that growing staff absence is beginning to create real challenges in schools. The Government position remains that schools will not close unless directed to do so by Public Health England. At a local level, individual schools must assess risks to decide if it is safe to be open for business.

With this in mind, I think it is helpful for parents to know that I am increasingly anticipating that some Partnership schools *may* need to consider closure - that situation *may* be upon us soon. We will avoid that as much as possible and endeavour to consider partial closure options before anything more drastic. **However, in the spirit of openness with parents, I would urge families to begin considering what their options might be in the event that a school had no alternative.**

We are also mindful of the need to support front line health care, NHS and other public sector staff at this difficult national time. In the event of a *partial* school closure, such families can make themselves known to the school and we will endeavour to enable your child to attend and join another part of the school which remains open for business. Of course, there is no requirement for you to do this and it is likely that you have other arrangements in mind but we would like such families to see this as an option.

Thanks once again for your support

Kind regards

Paul Howieson
CEO, Coastal Learning Partnership