

Tuesday 16 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Further to the email we sent on 12 March regarding coronavirus (COVID-19), we would like to reassure you that the impact on our school so far has been very limited. We have not had any confirmed cases of the virus at UCC.

The Senior Leadership Team is monitoring government advice to the public and schools on a daily basis. This guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>. We will be meeting every morning to discuss the current situation and to plan for the potential implications for UCC over the coming weeks and months.

I would like to reinforce the advice from government that anyone displaying any symptoms of the virus – students, staff or visitors – should stay at home for 7 days if they have either:

- a high temperature of 37.8° and/or
- a new, continuous cough.

You should not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital and you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.

In school, we are working to ensure that good personal hygiene advice is adhered to, through the washing of hands and use of tissues. We are expecting a delivery of hand sanitiser later this week and have plenty of hand wash and paper towels. We continue to remind students that maintaining good personal hygiene is currently the best way to stop the spread of infection. We would be grateful if this message could be reinforced at home.

Parents of students in Years 11 and 13 will probably have additional concerns about the impact coronavirus could have on this summer's external exams. The latest statement from Ofqual is as follows:

“We recognise that students, parents, schools and colleges will be concerned about the possible impact of coronavirus on the 2020 summer exam series. Our advice at this time is to continue to prepare for exams and other assessments as normal. We continue to work closely with exam boards, other regulators and the Department for Education and we have met to plan for a range of scenarios, as the public would expect. Our overriding priorities are fairness to students this summer and keeping disruption to a minimum. It is still many weeks until exams start and we will issue updated advice if necessary, giving schools and colleges as much notice as possible.”

Part of our planning in school is to ensure that we are able to maintain learning and preparations for exams in the event of a school closure. We are currently receiving enquiries from parents with regards to work for students who are not currently in school. In the event that a student is absent from school, please find work that is appropriate to their key stage on the front page of the school website; www.uilswatercc.co.uk.

More bespoke work is being developed in case of school closure. Students will be able to access this through RM Unify by going to the school website and clicking on the portal button on the menu bar. They should log in using their school user name plus “@ucc” and their normal school password.

In addition to the academic work, and to support students who are currently off school, we are also providing some “wellbeing” information. Students can also contact one of our Mental Health First Aiders via email if they want to discuss how they are feeling.

We have also attached a letter from the local authority that we received this afternoon clarifying the situation in schools at this time.

Finally, the latest guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health England about coronavirus in educational settings can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

This starts with the advice:

“Staff, young people and children should stay at home if they are unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature to avoid spreading infection to others. Otherwise they should attend education or work as normal.”

Yours faithfully

Mr S. Gilby
Headteacher