

Dear Parents/Carers,

In light of the increase in cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK and speculation about further measures which may be taken by Central Government in the coming weeks, I wanted to write to you to explain the steps that we are taking to prepare and respond.

The situation, as you will be aware, is dynamic and changing quickly. The Government has announced yesterday that it is moving to the Delay phase of its action plan. This allows the Government to implement a range of options which may have an impact on schools and classes across the country. Consequently, we are monitoring guidance from Public Health England closely and contingency planning for a number of scenarios.

Our priorities and the basis for our contingency plans are:

1. Preparing for the situation to escalate further.
2. Protecting our classes and the children and staff within them.
3. Providing ongoing education and pastoral care for the children we coach.

In terms of our preparations so far, we have been:

Monitoring the situation on a daily basis and providing updates and guidance to our staff members within the group.

Allowing the use of hand sanitizers and encouraging hand washing etc.

Preparing communications material.

Reviewing our class activities and procedures.

We have also taken the following steps to protect our classes, children and staff:

Emphasised the importance of handwashing and 'cough etiquette' through circle time at the start of sessions and listening to the children and calming their fears.

Focused on the cleanliness of high contact areas in the spaces we hire or schools we coach at.

We are also preparing our group to continue to provide educational and pastoral care for our children by:

Asking parents to inform us of any planned trips to countries badly affected by Coronavirus.

Asking those with temperatures above 37.8°C, or who have a persistent cough, to self-isolate for seven days.

Finalising contingency plans for a variety of scenarios, including: suspected or confirmed cases of Coronavirus within our classes or community or longer-term closures.

Together with the Schools we coach in, developing plans for home learning for our pupils, wherever possible learning lessons from overseas and sharing resources to minimise the impact on our staff.

It is not yet clear how the spread of Coronavirus will develop and the extent of its impact on our sessions in and out of schools. Therefore, we will all need to remain flexible, as a range of options is considered by the Government. These changes might include: - short-term changes to class hours or holiday periods to offset the impact of any interruption to pupils' learning. If we are required to close for a period of time, it is really important that we continue to provide children with structured education, especially those that have LAMDA examinations looming. There may therefore be a requirement for staff to continue to be available for work, working from home and offering on-line tuition sessions, to set and watch work and provide feedback, guidance and a sense of normality for our students during any period of closure. If these changes occur, then we will do all we can to reduce the impact for staff, but will need your continued enthusiasm, support and commitment to make them happen.

I will keep you updated of any developments and thank you for your support as we negotiate unfamiliar waters. If you have any questions, then please don't hesitate to get in touch or raise issues, either directly or through your class coaches.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Whitelock and all at Berzerk

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