



SEDBERGH
SCHOOL

FOUNDED 1525

**Sedbergh Schools' response to the risk presented by Novel Coronavirus
(2019-nCoV)**

We have been watching the development of the Novel Coronavirus outbreak in China and elsewhere over the past few weeks and are deeply concerned for all those who find themselves unwell and restricted in their movements and daily life. We hope the measures taken by governments will bring it under control and that vaccines will be found to restrict further distribution.

The purpose of this letter is to advise you about Sedbergh's response to the threat that the virus represents. We have gathered information from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the British Foreign Office, Public Health England, the Boarding Schools' Association and consulted the School Doctor.

The virus may be transmitted from person to person before any signs of infection are evident. It follows that the only way in which we can protect our pupils, staff and community is by reducing the risk of transmission from people who have a high likelihood of coming into contact with the virus.

As a result, the following risk reduction measures will be implemented with immediate effect:

1. Sedbergh will identify areas of high risk as being those where the WHO or local government has declared a state of emergency or those which are identified by the Foreign Office as places of high risk. This will be under regular review and any necessary updates provided to pupils, parents and the community.

Areas of high risk are currently defined as China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

2. Sedbergh will not allow any staff to travel to high risk areas on School business, nor allow any visitors, including parents and recruitment Agents, to visit the School from those areas. On arrival, Receptionists will ask all visitors if they have been to a high risk area.
3. Pupils are advised not to travel to high risk areas during Lent Half Term and the Easter holidays. They should remain in Britain and stay with a Guardian.
4. Adults or pupils who do travel to a high risk area must advise the Principal (principal@sedberghschool.org). They will be not be allowed to enter the School or come into contact with members of the community for two weeks (14 days) after arriving in

Britain. Families should be aware that it is unlikely that Guardians will be willing to accommodate pupils for this period of quarantine and that the School is unable to make such arrangements.

5. The School has been contacted by Guardian Agencies who can provide accommodation at short notice for those who now choose to remain in Britain during the Half Term and holiday periods. Please contact the Principal's Office for details.
6. The School Medical Centre has the necessary equipment and facilities to swiftly isolate suspected cases and arrange assessment.

We acknowledge that this does not protect our community from all risk because pupils, staff and members of the local community may still encounter another person who has returned from a high risk area. It follows that we ask you to consider your own travel itineraries and those of friends and family members who may travel to high risk areas and that you take steps to prevent their interaction with staff and pupils who will return to the School.

We hope that a combination of travel constraints, swift isolation of carriers and medical intervention will minimise the effects of the virus and its spread, however lessons learned from the SARS virus outbreak suggest that this is unlikely. That outbreak started in November 2002 and continued until curtailed by the summer weather in July 2003. We encourage families and staff to avoid visiting high risk areas during the Easter and Summer holidays. If a visit cannot be avoided they should return to Britain, but not to Sedbergh, two weeks before Term commences.

In taking these steps, we are making the safety of all members of our Schools and local communities our over-riding priority. We recognise that these measures may be inconvenient to some families, pupils and staff, and regret that is the case. We hope you will understand the urgent necessity of our decision.

Further information about the virus and protection may be found at:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

In the event that you have any questions about Sedbergh's position on this matter, please contact the Principal, Andrew Fleck, by email (principal@sedberghschool.org).

Andrew Fleck
Principal

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Sedbergh School
Sedbergh, Cumbria
LA10 5HG

Tel 015396 20535
www.sedberghschool.org