



Friday 13th March 2020

Dear parents/carers,

Re: Coronavirus: From 'containment' to 'delay' phase

I am writing to update you on our response to the latest situation regarding coronavirus. As you may be aware, government has moved onto the 'delay' phase of its plan to tackle COVID-19. At this time, the government has not taken the decision to close schools, however, we are monitoring the situation very closely: I receive daily updates from the Department of Education and will share any further information as we receive it from DfE and Public Health England. Please be assured that, should schools be forced to close, plans will be in place to continue the learning of all pupils.

We would like to reassure you that we take the health and safety of our pupils and staff very seriously, so we're sharing guidance from Public Health England on steps you should be taking. We are continually reminding children and staff to wash hands regularly throughout the school day and continue to clean the school thoroughly to prevent infection. The attached action plan (also available on the website) details our extensive planning and additional safeguards which have been put into place. We ask that you also follow the guidelines in place at home, so that children are getting a clear and consistent message.

We have outlined some of the key information below and more detailed information can be found [HERE](#).

How to prevent the spread of infection:

Make sure you and your children follow these general principles to prevent spreading any respiratory virus:

- Wash your hands often – with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or an alcohol-based sanitiser if soap and water aren't available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- If you feel unwell, stay at home and don't attend work or school
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home

Children may bring in their own hand sanitiser but should not share it with others.

Symptoms to look out for:

A new, persistent cough

Fever (a temperature of 38 degrees C or higher)

Difficulty in breathing

If these symptoms are present, please call NHS 111 – don't go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment. Please DO NOT come into school – instead follow the medical advice given.

Headteacher
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At this time of year there are pupil absences due to seasonal colds, coughs and sneezes. If you do keep your child off school because of ill health, we would be grateful if you could communicate the specific reason to us when you advise us of the absence. This will help us monitor any patterns within the school community. In the unlikely event that you are asked to get your child tested for Covid-19 please inform us as soon as possible. In addition, please continue to inform us of any close family member who has returned from abroad in the last month. Also if any family member has been in contact with someone at work who has developed symptoms or been tested, please let us know. The more information we can gather, the easier and better for us to identify any child or member of our school community who could be at higher risk.

As we are following national guidance, if you decide to keep your child off school because of the concerns, then they will go down as unauthorised on the register. We understand that, in some cases, there may be medical reasons for your decision to keep your child home – but as guidance has not specified this as a necessary caution, we cannot authorise this absence.

As many children have expressed some anxiety over the situation, my assembly on Monday 16th March will explain the virus to the children and about the precautions they can take to avoid spreading it. It is very important to keep reiterating to all children that, although children can spread it, they are at very little risk of becoming seriously ill.

I do hope that you can understand the predicament this puts the school and teachers in, but we continue to do the very best for the children in school and will continue to keep you informed if the situation changes.

If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Julie-Ann Swaysland
Headteacher