



Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear parents/carers,

**Re: Coronavirus (Covid-19) – New Update**

Following my letter dated Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and the updates from the Government yesterday, I would like to make sure that all members of the school community are aware of the following information and new procedures we are putting into place:

**Self-Isolation (copied from Public Health England)**

- **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.
- **if you live with others and you or one of them have symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.** The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

As a school, we are required to follow this guidance. Therefore, if anyone in your household develops a **‘new, continuous cough or has a high temperature’**, all the family must self-isolate for 14 days. For further information about this and what you should and shouldn’t do, please visit the Public Health England website via this [LINK](#).

**Non-Essential Contact** - For consistency for families with children at different schools, I have spoken to many of these schools to ensure that our responses are similar (or the same), where possible. Following these discussions and the clear advice from the government, we are putting the following in place with immediate effect to contain our school community and make reasonable adjustments where practical.

1. **Parent Consultations (Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020)** - These are postponed. As new information is received, I will inform you of how these will be rearranged. This could involve telephone consultations or, should the school close for a period, staff being asked to write full reports while working at home to be released as soon as possible. This will then lead to the consultations being swapped to the end of the school year, if possible at that time.
2. **Staggered Drop-off and collection** – With immediate effect, we are taking the following response to minimise gatherings on the school site.  
**Morning Drop-off** – Children should continue to enter through the playground and wait for their teacher to escort them to class. However, we will now be entering the classroom from

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8.45am to stagger the arrival and handwashing of pupils. I encourage you to make the most of the drop-off option and ensure that adults leave the school site straight away. Children in nursery continue with their usual morning entrances, however, I ask that parents do not stay for the usual settling in time unless their child is distressed.

**Collection** – We are also extending the window for this. All classes will be asked to be on the playground to dismiss children at 3.15pm from Wednesday. Therefore, children can be collected from the playground between 3.15pm and 3.35pm. Again, please do not all arrive at 3.15pm to avoid gatherings on the playground and please leave as soon as possible.

**Playtimes/Lunchtimes** – These are currently staggered so no changes will be made here.

**Breakfast Club** - This will continue as usual. Again, this helps with staggering the start and provides a valuable service to all of you.

**After-school clubs** – This will continue for the rest of this week but, aside from homework club, will stop as of Friday. Homework club will still be available for pupils as it helps with staggering the end of the school day.

3. **Visitors in school** – These are all being cancelled within school from Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March. This includes Celebration assemblies and the EYFS stay and play event on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Only essential visits by parents will be permitted.
4. **Absence & School Work** - We have a number of pupils who are not in school because they are self-isolating or have someone at home with an underlying health issue or, indeed, have one themselves. I expect that number of absentees will increase with the change in government guidance yesterday and I also expect that there will be staff absence for the same reasons. As the Headteacher, I have the ability to authorise absences in 'exceptional circumstance'. This situation clearly falls into this bracket and I will therefore mark all children who are absent due to having a cough or high temperature as a 'Y' (Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). In order to continue our robust safeguarding procedures, all families in self-isolation must inform us immediately by email or phone that they are doing so. We will contact these families daily to check how they are and offer support where appropriate.

**However, pupils who are not self-isolating for their health or the health of someone in their home but whose parents are choosing to keep them at home 'just in case' will continue to have their absence unauthorised.**

We have had a number of emails from parents asking teachers to send work home for absent pupils and, while I understand the parental concern, I do not believe that it is reasonable to expect teachers to do this on top of everything else they are already doing,

which will undoubtedly extend to covering for absent colleagues in the days ahead. Therefore, unless school is forced to close to all pupils, no work will be provided. There are a huge number of resources available online and I encourage parents to make use of these and focus on reading and basic number skills. Staff are currently planning ahead to provide work in the event of a forced school closure.

All measures outlined above are to minimise the spread of the virus in the school so that we can stay open and stop any external persons coming into our school. I also have a responsibility to protect our staff and hopefully these measures will prevent them becoming ill, thus keeping the school open.

I request that everyone follows the guidance outlined above. I appreciate that many of you will have differing views about the steps being taken in school and Nationally, but all decisions taken in school are made in the best interest of the pupils and staff within school.

Finally, I would like to stress that we have had no confirmed cases in our school community, despite much speculation. Should we have a confirmed case, all parents would be informed of this immediately and school would follow all advice given by Public Health England. We believe that all measures above are in the best interest of all involved and will continue to update you should the situations change.

As you may be aware, the Government are sending out daily information which I will continue to act upon and I will update these procedures as necessary.

Finally, this is an unusual and worrying time for everyone within our community and I would ask that everyone support each other as much as possible. If we can do anything as a school to support you, please do let us know as we will happily assist where we can.

Thank you again for your continued support with this ever-evolving situation.

Yours sincerely,

Julie-Ann Swaysland  
**Headteacher**