

2nd March 2020

Dear Parents

With the news in the media being updated regularly regarding Coronavirus, we understand that families may have concerns. We are following advice given to us by the Local Authority, Public Health England and Partner Agencies. We are working to continuously monitor updates from these agencies so we have the most up to date information and action. We understand the worry that this situation may cause for families and that our children's health and wellbeing is at the forefront of all we do.

The advice from the Government is that *"No school should close in response to a suspected (or confirmed) COVID-19 case unless directed to do so by Public Health England"*. We wanted to share with you the most up to date guidance from the Government so that all of us can be fully informed.

The current advice from the Government is: The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, it is unlikely that they have been infected.

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has confirmed COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have been reported in children.

Preventing the spread of infection There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

At school, we regularly talk to the children about good hand washing and hygiene as we have been doing so again today. There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport.



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- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
- students, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
 - before leaving home
 - on arrival at school
 - after using the toilet
 - after breaks and sporting activities
 - before food preparation
 - before eating any food, including snacks
 - before leaving school
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- If you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment;
- see further information on the [Public Health England Blog](#) and the [NHS UK website](#).

These are things that we will continue to talk to the children about and ensure that children wash their hands before having their lunch or snack whilst in school.

Face masks for the general public, students, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

There is specific advice from the Government regarding people who may have been abroad to specific areas recently. This is that people who have returned from [Category 1 specified countries/areas](#) in the last 14 days should self-isolate. This includes avoiding attending an education setting or work until 14 days after they leave Hubei Province.

People who have returned from [Category 2 specified countries/areas](#) in the last 14 days, are advised to stay at home if they develop symptoms. All other students and staff should continue to attend school, including their siblings attending the same or a different school (unless advised not to by public health officials).



The DfE has today launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

As a community, we want to continue to work together to have monitor the situation closely so that we have the most up to date information and we will ensure that we do this. We will share any further updates with you so that we are all fully informed but we would like to reassure you once again that we have your children's health and wellbeing at the centre of all of our decisions.

Please be aware that this is an evolving situation and public advice may change. We will issue further information if this is necessary.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S.A. Ryan'.

Miss D Ryan
Head of Academy

