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Coronavirus Update

13th March 2020

Dear Parents,

The Coronavirus situation is a rapidly evolving one with lots of contradictory messages out there in the media. I'm writing to help provide you with clarity and reassurance following a briefing by the Local Authority this morning.

We are currently business as normal in school with enhanced cleaning, especially around key areas such as toilets and regularly touched surfaces. Door handles and light switches are being cleaned on a constant loop and we're monitoring soap dispensers. Hand gels are dotted around school and we've introduced some changes to practice such as not having whole school assemblies with a packed hall. We have also shared good practice with the children around hand washing and personal hygiene, which has been done in a child-appropriate manner.

I have created a web page with helpful advice on Coronavirus for your ease of reference. You can find my letters to you on there as well as some useful prompts for adults on how to talk to your child about the coronavirus. You can also find a simple NHS video on how to best wash your hands. You can find this under the Well-being in Action tab or by [clicking here](#).

Following the government's most recent announcement last night for individuals to self-isolate, please accept my apologies for any confusion or distress on arrival at school today in relation to this. We are trying to find the best way forward. For clarity, we are asking staff to monitor children for signs of a persistent cough or / and a high temperature. If we have a real concern about this, we will ask you to collect and suggest you ring 111. If we have a moderate concern, we will discuss this with you and come to an informed mutual decision.

For your reassurance, if you are self-isolating this will be an authorised absence.

If you think your child has any condition that severely affects their immune system, please do contact the school so we can agree the best approach which might mean staying off school for the time being. We have contacted some parents already along these lines to agree the best way forward.

We have detailed plans in place for school closure should we have a confirmed case, staff absence or be directed to close by the government. In any of these eventualities, you will be notified at the earliest time and kept up to date with plans.

If we close, children will continue to learn from home. On the first day of closure, teachers will use that day to set up the working arrangements as described below.

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Children in Key Stage 2 will use *Google Classroom*. Each child should have a username and password to access their Google account. Teachers will be checking this with children shortly. It is a good idea to practice accessing this now so you can clarify any issues beforehand.

For children in Reception and Key Stage 1, work will be emailed direct to you for you to share with your child. Teachers will soon be sending home an exercise book for your child to do this work in. Children will also be able to email return work to the teacher should you wish.

There will be IT email support available during any closure.

If your child will not have access to online facilities at home, please let the office know at your earliest convenience. If this is the case, we have made plans to post work to your address.

If you are worried about supplies of food at home, the LA reassured schools today that this is a top priority to ensure food gets to our most vulnerable families. They will be setting up a helpline that will come into action should the need arise.

To help keep things in perspective:

- Although it can last for up to 72 hours on surfaces, it is very difficult to contract it from surfaces.
- People are only infectious when showing symptoms.
- Cases of Coronavirus are expected to peak which means it will drop again which indicates this will all pass in good time
- Work on vaccines appears to indicate it might be available by the end of 2020
- Mortality rate looks like being about 1% and this looks to be the old (especially over 80s) and those with pre-existing medical conditions that severely affect their immune system

Reminders:

Helpline for parents-

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

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

Updates on COVID-19 can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

During this challenging time, please be patient with us. We are endeavouring to continue as normal but some things may slip off our list of priorities or take longer to get round to. Obviously we will always prioritise any safeguarding concerns.

Very best wishes to you all and your families.

Stay well,

Tim Hughes (Headteacher)

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