

Monday 16 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to update you as to the school's ongoing response to the corona virus. We are, as you would expect, continuing to follow DfE & Public Health guidance. We waited to send out this letter until today in case any significant decisions might have been made by the government over the weekend. We would now like to clarify with you our arrangements for the coming week although the situation is very dynamic and could change from day to day.

Since the outbreak of the virus we have been taking regular advice from the government. This includes ensuring that children are aware of basic hygiene, good practice of hand washing and are being reminded to wash their hands regularly throughout the day. Cleaning staff are being particularly vigilant and they are paying particular attention to desks, chair backs, door handles and hand rails. Pupils are being reminded to sneeze or cough into a tissue and throw it away, or into the crook of their elbow rather than their hand if they don't have a tissue.

We are also being vigilant in applying the guidance from Public Health on 7-day self-isolation for all staff & pupils who are demonstrating any of the following symptoms:

- *A high temperature (above 37.8 degrees)*
- *Difficulty in breathing*
- *A new continuous cough.*

We appreciate that this represents a challenge for all families but we have to do all we can to protect our 500+ pupils and staff and our 300+ families, particularly those with underlying conditions and who are therefore very vulnerable.

The guidance also says :

DO NOT GO TO A GP SURGERY, PHARMACY OR HOSPITAL

You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home

Use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service if:

- *You feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home*
- *Your condition gets worse*
- *Your symptoms do not get better after 7 days*

Use the 111 coronavirus service online

Only call 111 if you cannot get help online

Further advice can be found at the NHS website

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

As part of our phased risk assessment procedures, we will be implementing additional precautionary measures this week:

- Y3 swimming will be cancelled until further notice.
- All trips outs will also be cancelled for the foreseeable future and we will not be going out of school to engage in community events.
- Our planned Easter holiday club will also be cancelled.
- We will only have class-based assemblies/worship at the present time.
- We are controlling the access of visitors to the school based on priority need. This means that we are asking all our volunteers and helpers to suspend helping in school for the current moment.
- We have been in contact with FABB to cancel the planned Mothers' Day coffee morning. We know that many of you will be disappointed by this and I am sure that FABB will do their

utmost to work around this cancellation and help mark Mothers' Day in the best way we can in the current circumstances.

We understand that more things could change in the next few days and weeks and we will respond to any changes appropriate and we will keep you informed via School Dojo.

We know that parents will have questions about other events like the Y4 & Y6 residential trips. I am truly sorry that we are not in a position to offering a definitive answer at this stage. This is the same for so many schools at this time but the eight local schools in the Penair Partners cluster are liaising very closely together on a range of issues like this so that we are being fair, measured and consistent in our responses. We will keep you updated as to our decision-making.

The situation in terms of school closure is still uncertain and we are planning a series of actions so that we can be as responsive as possible to the range of potential eventualities

1. In the event of staff sickness, we will endeavour to use all our contacts to find suitable supply cover as well as utilise all staff in school.
2. In the event that action 1 is not successful we will ask for parents/carers support by requesting that families keep their children at home if at all possible. This may apply to specific year groups rather than the whole school.
3. In the event that action 2 is not successful we will consult with our chair of governors and together with myself we will decide whether there is a need to close the school on the grounds of health and safety.
4. The school will close because we are directed to do so from the Department for Education. We hope that we will not have to take these actions any time soon and we recognise the significant impact they will have for parents/carers and families.

Should you have any queries regarding our arrangements, we are signposting all parents to our School Dojo page for the latest information. We will also post all letters via SchoolsBuddy so that you know where to go to check for information & updates.

In the event that the school is advised by the government to close or it has to close due to staffing levels, then we will inform parents as quickly as possible - by text and email as well as by placing information on the school website.

We have started to make provision for work that can be completed at home by the children. Teachers in every year group will share a Home Learning Overview with all parents via class dojo in the event of school closure. This overview will contain a range of age-related work which your child can do at home. Should schools be closed for an extended period of time, then the overview will be updated for each term-time week.

The overview will outline a wide variety of useful websites which the children could access as part of their home learning. Please can you let us know if you think you will have difficulties accessing online learning and we will do our utmost to support continued learning for your child.

Thank you for your continued support in what you can imagine is an ever-changing and at times challenging situation. As ever, if you have any queries, please feel free to contact the school.

Best wishes
Helen Giblett
Headteacher