

28th February 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

As the situation regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus) continues to develop both in the UK and abroad, we would like to take this opportunity to outline the procedures we are undertaking as a school to support the health and well-being of students and staff.

General School Procedures

Following the half term break, we are asking all staff and students who have travelled to any of the broader geographical areas affected by COVID-19 not to attend school, or to return home if they are in school, should they develop any symptoms. This approach is in-line with current DfE guidance.

Once staff or students have received advice from the NHS, staff and students will be allowed to return to school only where the NHS have indicated it is appropriate.

Where staff or students who have visited the quarantined towns in northern Italy, Hubei Province, Iran or any other high-risk areas identified by the government, we will ask students and staff not to attend school and advise them to immediately self-isolate and seek further advice from the NHS.

Students who are off school due to illness or quarantine will be provided with appropriate school work and support from individual class teachers and the school pastoral team.

If a student has been off school as a precaution, we would ask that parents contact the school before the student returns.

Higher Risk Students

For students who may be at higher risk should there be an outbreak at the school, we will be contacting parents individually to keep them updated more frequently. If you believe your child may be at higher risk in the event of an outbreak but we may not be aware of that, please contact the school to register for individual updates.

School Trips

We are monitoring all school trips planned over the coming months and will make decisions on a case-by-case basis as to whether those trips can go ahead based on NHS and government advice.

Government Guidance

The links below provide further information and advice on COVID-19:

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk>

The Department for Education has now issued guidance for parents with school age children which is summarised in Appendix A:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Thank you for your continued support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Kirstie Johnson
Head of College

Appendix A:

COVID-19: GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

1. Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between two 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 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.

2. How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within two metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.

There are two routes by which people could become infected:

- Secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
- It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face).

There is currently no good evidence that people who do not have symptoms are infectious to others.

3. Preventing 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.

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
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin
- People who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
- Pupils, 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

PHE has a suite of materials that contains public health advice about how you can help stop the spread of viruses, like those that cause COVID-19, by practicing good

respiratory and hand hygiene. To access, download and share this information you will need to register for an account which only takes a couple of minutes.

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

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 return.

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.