



17/03/2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

COVID-19 Updates

Following on from my letter 13/03 and the updated news and advice regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) please see some further information below. I need to emphasise that as far as we are aware, we have had no confirmed cases within the school community. However, we already have a significant number of students and staff who are self-isolating.

Based on the new guidance, if you already have a child who has been sent home and is self-isolating, this period of self-isolation should now extend to a minimum of 14 days and replace the previous guidance of 7 days with 48 hours clear of symptoms.

As a parent/carer of a child in the school please continue to make an individual risk assessment for your child and to then decide whether you would like to send them into school. Any future class or school closures will be based on staffing levels in school as well as student needs.

As a result of the updated information and available advice the school is following the current guidelines:

- Anyone with a fever or persistent cough should stay at home for seven days if they live alone or 14 days if they live with others. Anyone who lives with someone displaying coronavirus symptoms should also stay at home for 14 days. People who have to isolate themselves should ask others for help. This new guideline coming into effect has resulted in significant staffing absence and may result in class closures.
- Everyone should stop non-essential contact with others. This is particularly important for people over 70, those with underlying health conditions and pregnant women. This could again lead to further class closures.
- People should work from home where they can.
- People should avoid places like pubs, clubs and theatres. This applies especially to those in London which is "a few weeks ahead" of the rest of the UK.
- People should stop all unnecessary travel.
- By the weekend, those with the most serious health conditions should be largely shielded from social contact for 12 weeks. This **will** result in class closures from next Monday.
- We are advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.

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This group includes those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
 - chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
 - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
 - chronic kidney disease
 - chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
 - chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
 - diabetes
 - problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
 - a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
 - being seriously overweight (a BMI of 40 or above)
 - those who are pregnant

Note: there are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you are in this category, next week the NHS in England will directly contact you with advice around more stringent measures you should take in order to keep yourself and others safe. For now, you should rigorously follow the social distancing advice in full, outlined below. People falling into this group are those who may be at particular risk due to complex health problems such as:

- People who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication
- People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment
- People with severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)
- People with severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)

Handwashing and Respiratory Hygiene

There are general principles you can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Washing your hands more often - with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser when you get home or into work, when you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who have symptoms
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin and wash your hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home

Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Scott Jarred", enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Scott Jarred

Headteacher