



6<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents,

You will all have read and heard about the various contingency plans in place for the UK in response to the current outbreak of COVID-19, or novel coronavirus, with the Government announcing a move towards the 'Delay' phase of their response. I wanted to explain the steps that we have already taken and are taking here at School to manage the situation at present and as we look ahead to the various possible scenarios over the coming weeks and months. You will understand, I'm sure, that it is impossible to plan for every possible outcome, nor would it be helpful to have fixed plans at this point when the situation remains so changeable, but I hope it is reassuring for you to know that we are in the process of considering a variety of options and planning our response.

What have we done so far?

Pupils have been reminded to maintain good personal hygiene. Staff are regularly reminding children of the importance of this. All classrooms have disposable tissues to catch coughs and sneezes and children are asked to wash their hands regularly. The 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' message will be given to them in Assembly without causing anxiety, reminding pupils that the novel coronavirus is currently not widespread in the UK, that it appears to cause relatively milder symptoms in children, and that personal hygiene is an important part of our collective effort to limit the spread of this and other seasonal diseases such as influenza or the common cold.

Building on the already rigorous standards of cleaning across the school, which ensure regular cleaning of door handles, light switches, desks and other surfaces, we have instigated additional steps to disinfect hard surfaces and toilets to a more stringent standard. We are carefully following the advice given to Schools by Public Health England and the Department for Education, as well as checking advice given by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Government's main pages containing information for the public.

Parents can access this and other relevant information at:

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

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan/coronavirus-action-plan-a-guide-to-what-you-can-expect-across-the-uk>

The Department for Education has published a helpline for Schools, parents and young people to contact if they have queries about COVID-19 related to education. The contact details are: 0800 046 8687 and [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk) (8am-6pm Monday to Friday).

We will continue to follow the advice given within the pages above.

Parents who are concerned that their son or daughter is displaying symptoms of the disease should call 111 in the first instance and follow the advice given by the NHS. The following link provides advice on the symptoms to look out for and the actions you should take if you feel you or your children may have been in contact with the virus: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

We will continue to inform parents of changes to information we receive but hope to continue operating as normally as we can within any constraints placed upon us by PHE, Government or the Department for Education.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Please do continue to reassure your children and encourage good habits of personal hygiene.

Yours sincerely

Gerri Howard



