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“SMILING, CARING AND LEARNING TOGETHER ON A JOURNEY WITH GOD”

4th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

You may have seen several reports in the news that confirm there have been two confirmed cases of Coronavirus – COVID-19 in West Sussex.

I would like to reassure you that we remain in regular contact with West Sussex County Council and Public Health England to ensure we have the most up-to-date advice and information. On their advice the school remains open as usual.

The Department for Education has established a coronavirus **telephone helpline 0800 0468687**, which is operational 0800-1800 Monday-Friday to answer your queries. You can also email DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

The latest advice and information about the virus and the situation in the UK can be found on:

- the NHS website at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- the government website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-forthe-public>

The situation is continuing to change and therefore guidance regarding actions that should be taken for schools is being regularly updated.

Following the advice from the Department for Education and Public Health England, we are ensuring that children have been reminded about how to thoroughly wash their hands along with the importance of this.

In line with the most recent guidance, we will be ensuring that the children wash their hands when they come in to school and before they leave school at the end of the day. The advice also states that we should all wash our hands before leaving home to go to school or work.

Good hygiene is important at all times but, due to the current situation, we would ask for your support in playing our part in minimising the risk of the virus spreading at this time.

The NHS website contains useful hygiene and prevention advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

FAQs

If I live in West Sussex or Surrey am I at extra risk because of the recent cases?

- We ensure that someone with coronavirus doesn't put others at risk by treating them in isolation and carefully investigating who they had close contact with through contact tracing.
- [Contact tracing is a fundamental part of outbreak control](#) that's used by public health professionals around the world.
- If a person tests positive for coronavirus, we speak to the patient to identify anyone who has had close contact with them during the time that they are considered to be infectious, and make every effort to find these people as soon as possible.
- Once we have contacted them we can then give them the advice they need. If they are in groups considered to be a higher risk, we make sure that we follow up with them daily to see how they are. If they become unwell we are then able to assess them quickly and take appropriate action.

What does self-isolation mean for people who don't have symptoms?

- Just like when you have the flu, individuals should remain at home and should not go to work, school or public areas. Where possible, individuals should avoid having visitors to their home but it is ok for friends, family or delivery drivers to drop off food. Individuals should not use public transport or taxis until 14 days after their return from Wuhan.
- Individuals should monitor their symptoms and call NHS 111 (or your national alternative) if they develop any of the following symptoms – fever, cough, and difficulty breathing.

There are things you can do to help stop germs like coronavirus spreading:

- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available

There is also an NHS link which contains hygiene and prevention advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

PHE advice on public events

- Most people can continue to go to work, school and other public places and only need to stay away (self-isolate) if they have been advised by NHS 111 or a medical professional.
- The virus is spread person-to-person and as the individual is receiving treatment at a specialist centre that immediate risk has been reduced.
- PHE are tracing all contacts of the case and will advise people on any actions they need to take including in some cases self-isolation.
- Everyone else should continue as normal but take care to follow public health advice to help reduce the risk of infection <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For more info on common questions I would look at our Q&A blog which is continually updated <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

Do I need to avoid public places?

Most people can continue to go to work, school and other public places.

You only need to stay away from public places (self-isolate) if advised to by the 111 online coronavirus service or a medical professional. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

What can I do to reduce my risk of catching coronavirus?

There are things you can do to help stop germs like coronavirus spreading:

- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel 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.

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

If I live in the area where coronavirus patients are reported as coming from – am I at extra risk?

We ensure that someone with coronavirus doesn't put others at risk by treating them in isolation and carefully investigating who they had close contact with through contact tracing.

[Contact tracing is a fundamental part of outbreak control](#) that's used by public health professionals around the world.

If a person tests positive for coronavirus, we speak to the patient to identify anyone who has had close contact with them during the time they are considered to be infectious and go all out to find these people as soon as possible.

Once we have contacted them we can then give them the advice they need. If they are in groups considered to be a higher risk, we make sure that we follow up with them daily to see how they are. If they become unwell we are then able to assess them quickly and take appropriate action.

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

What about our forthcoming school trips?

We would advise you to look at the FCO website and monitor this as the situation is evolving. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Yours sincerely

Miss Anna Wells

Headteacher