



HOLY TRINITY C.E. SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: MISS S. CHALONER

Tuesday 17th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We continue to work to ensure we are minimising the risks of COVID-19 to all of our children, staff and families. We are currently looking at ways in which we can reduce the amount of unnecessary face-to-face contact. We have now cancelled swimming lessons, and parent consultation meetings. If you have an urgent query about your child, please phone or email the office. We will be sending reports home as planned on Friday.

You have probably seen the news that the government announced some new measures to deal with COVID-19 yesterday. As before, the advice remains that effective hand hygiene and using a tissue when coughing or sneezing are some of the most effective ways in which we can help reduce the spread of the virus. The school is continuing to do all that it can to minimise the spread with good hygiene and is following all the advice from Public Health and Herts County Council. We have put lots of information on the school website.

Self-isolation and staying at home: As you know the government has widened their advice on who should self-isolate to include those that have coronavirus like symptoms - a new or continuous cough or a high temperature, however mild - should stay at home for 14 days to protect others and help slow the spread of the disease. All our staff will be expected to follow this advice, and we ask you to ensure that your children do so too. If your children are absent from school because they are ill, please continue to call/email the school and update us.

Current guidance is as follows:

- if you live with others and you or one of them have symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house for **14 days**. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community
- for anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period.
- if you can, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period
- if you cannot move vulnerable people out of your home, stay away from them as much as possible
- if you have coronavirus symptoms:
 - 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
 - testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home and consider what can be done for vulnerable people in the household
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home

- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the [NHS 111 online](#) coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

In certain circumstances you may be advised by medical professionals to keep your child at home even if they are not unwell. If this is the case, please let us know and we will support your decision. I understand that parents are concerned about the risk of their children catching Coronavirus and that some may wish to keep children at home even though they have not had any medical advice to do so. However, we cannot agree to a child's absence for that reason alone. All children who are well enough to come to school are expected to continue attending as normal unless advised otherwise by Public Health England.

The possibility of school closure: Some parents have asked whether we could choose to close the school now. If we are ordered to close the school by Public Health England, because there is a risk to children and staff we will do. If the government make a decision to close all schools we will do so, otherwise our intention is to stay open and operate as normal. The Government has made it clear it expects schools to remain open unless public health advice has been given to close. If we are experiencing serious staffing issues, we may need to partially closed. We are sure that you will be supportive of this.

We are however preparing in case the school closes and we are looking at ways for providing learning activities for the children. This will be on the school website. We recognise that if closure is necessary this will have significant implications for many of our families with issues ranging from the loss of free school means to problems for families finding suitable childcare. If you are concerned about managing with food and general supplies over the next few weeks, please let the office, Miss Plant or myself know as we can order foodbank deliveries to support you at this challenging time.

Keeping informed: Obviously, we will continue to provide updates as the situation continues to develop and would ask that you inform the school of any contact your family may have had with a person with symptoms or who has tested positive.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Chaloner
HEADTEACHER