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know, love, serve; God, Ourselves & Others

Data protection: Please notify the office if you change your details or change your mind about consent.

Coronavirus - 18th March 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

We want safe and happy children in our school learning and aspiring to live interesting, happy and fulfilling lives. We put the children's health first and follow guidance from health professionals while adhering to the Education Act 1996.

With daily updates there is an absolute necessity for clear and accurate communication between parents and the school. If you are unsure or have any questions, please call or email rather than turning to social media for second-hand information.

Chickenpox

School advice on chicken pox remains the same and there has been no change to the information coming from the office. Chickenpox is infectious from 2 days before the spots appear to until they have all crusted over, usually 5 days after they first appeared. Therefore, we advise that the children are off for 5 days from onset of the rash. It takes 1 to 3 weeks from the time you were exposed to chickenpox for the spots to start appearing.

More information is available on the NHS site including in the rare case of getting chickenpox when you're pregnant:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chickenpox/>

Partial or Full Closure

The Government's stance on schools has not changed and the expectation is still that schools will stay open. Yesterday this was once again addressed with Boris Johnson saying that this position would be under "continuous review". Gavin Williamson (MP) continues to meet with Headteachers.

Guidance for education settings was updated on the 16th and this is what we are following:

- If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education setting they should be sent home and advised to follow the staying at home guidance.

Self-Isolation – New guidance for households with symptoms

Yesterday, the Government clarified new guidance on whole household isolation which it introduced on Monday in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak:

If any member of the household has 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 were on in the original 14-day isolation period.



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE



The symptoms are:

- New, continuous cough – other viruses are still circulating at this time of year so it is important that a measured response is taken.
- High temperature (37.8 degrees and above)
- Shortness of breath – likely to follow the first 2 symptoms.

As I have previously mentioned there are a host of other viruses that are still circulating at this time of year. Where children have a cough (not continuous) or are hot (between 36.4 and 37.8) we will have conversations with parents about appropriate action and support them in their decision as they are the best people to judge if their own child is suffering from a seasonal illness. **Once again if a child has a new, continuous cough or high temperature (37.8 degrees and above) they will be sent home.**

Information on 'Coronavirus, Flu, Cold or Allergies?' can be found below but please keep in mind that these are common symptoms, which may vary from person to person.

<https://hartfordhealthcare.org/about-us/news-press/news-detail?articleid=24722&publicId=395>

The full stay at home guidance for households with these symptoms can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

The Prime Minister's statement from Monday 16th March can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-on-coronavirus-16-march-2020>

Students with low immunity – New guidance on protecting older people and vulnerable adults

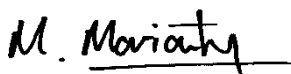
On Monday guidance was published by Public Health England (PHE) about vulnerable groups and which people have an increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus. These people have been advised to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures. Details of the groups can be found:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Read alongside other updates, previous DfE advice and in the knowledge that getting access to a GP is becoming increasingly difficult we will have discussions with parents who feel that their child is not able to attend school because of an underlying health condition that means they, or a family member in their household, are particularly vulnerable to coronavirus. The guidance from the DfE is clear that there needs to be a pragmatic approach on whether to authorise such absence, taking into account individual circumstances and they will back the headteachers' judgement – **having spoken to parents.**

We are working closely with the Local Authority and the Headteacher Associations in order to offer a consistent and safe response to the current crisis. The health and safety of your children is everyone's first priority. It is a changing landscape and we very much appreciate the vast majority of parents who are working with the school on this. If you have any questions, please call [01621 815456](tel:01621815456) or email admin@stlukesschool.co.uk

Yours sincerely,



Martin Moriarty
Headteacher