



SUPPORT FOR LIFE THROUGH
COMPASSION, PERSEVERANCE & RESPECT

Monday 16th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to share with you some specific advice about the Coronavirus outbreak and our plans and thoughts for the coming weeks. As I am sure you will understand, it is hard to predict what the impact on schools might be, but we have taken steps to plan as best as we can for future events and would appreciate your support and understanding. Please feel free to share and discuss this letter with your children.

The most important thing we can all do at present is follow the clear guidance given by Public Health England.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

In line with this advice, if your child shows symptoms of Coronavirus (high temperature/dry cough) they are to stay at home for SEVEN days. If in doubt, please call 111 for clarification.

At the present time schools have been told to remain open even if we have pupils and staff who are self-isolating as a precautionary measure. In school we continue to promote, at every opportunity, the importance of good hygiene. When children arrive in school, they will be asked to wash their hands before starting lessons. We will take additional opportunities to ensure hands are cleaned. We will continue to use our 'snuffle stations' to ensure that children are being as hygienic as possible when blowing their noses.

All school excursions and trips where our children may come into close contact with others will be cancelled to avoid unnecessary contact with others.

We hope that these preventative measures support the 'delay' phase of the response from Government.

Contingency Planning

As the Coronavirus outbreak develops, we will be following advice from the Department for Education and the Government. This might, at some point, involve temporarily closing the school on a full / partial basis to our pupils and possibly to our staff as well. If this happens, please note:

- We will send messages to all families to keep them updated as the situation develops.

Mrs Threlfall: Head Teacher

Embleton Vincent Edwards C of E Aided Primary School, Embleton, Alnwick Northumberland NE66 3XR

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- We will ensure that the school website is also kept up to date.
- If you have any questions please use admin@vincentedwards.northumberland.sch.uk to contact us.

Learning

Whilst there is no substitute for being in a classroom with our staff, if we do have to close, we will set regular work electronically. We are spending some time this week showing the children the various different websites that we will be using. In particular we will be hosting most of our work through google classroom. We will provide more details regarding how we will create a daily structure for this distance learning if and when necessary. Your children will be taught how to access their google drive this week.

If your child may not be able to access a laptop and/or tablet at home please speak to the office.

Staff Absence

It is possible that the school may need to operate as normal but with a higher number of staff absent than usual. There may be a point, however, that we need to close the school, or reduce the time we are open, due to not having sufficient staff. We will ensure that we have enough staff to keep your children safe.

Please be aware that staff will have to follow advice from Public Health England about attending work if they have been in contact with cases of Coronavirus or have cold/flu-like symptoms. They may not be able to attend work for a period of time even though they want to do so.

Further Information and Avoiding Anxiety

The Government and the NHS have advice about Coronavirus (also called Covid-19) available on their websites. I recommend that you look to those sources of information for updates and news about the virus and avoid listening to rumour and second hand information from other sources. This advice has been updated yesterday so it is important that we all check again for the most up to date information.

Clearly this is a developing situation and has the potential to create real anxiety. You know your own child best, but together we should:

- Do our best not to sensationalise or overdramatise the issue.
- Steer children away from some of the news coverage and social media channels.
- Stick to known facts rather than speculation.
- Avoid passing on our own concerns to our children.
- Look out for and protect our most vulnerable.

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Kind regards

Nicola Threlfall
Headteacher

For parents wishing to keep up to date with the latest situation, the following links may prove useful

- Up to date Government advice on Coronavirus: www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public
- The Government's Coronavirus Action Plan; a guide to what you can expect across the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan>

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