



Headteacher
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Tuesday 17th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

COVID-19 Pandemic (Coronavirus) Update

As you know, the governing body and leaders of the school have been following the guidance of Public Health England, the Department for Education and Essex Local Authority with regards to how to respond to the current COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to receive regular updates and are meeting as a leadership team each day to ensure we are in line with all guidance in terms of how the school continues to operate.

On Monday 16th March, the Prime Minister explained how the advice around self-isolation changed to the following:

- If any member of a family show symptoms the advice is that the **whole** household should self-isolate for 14 days. This is to help to protect others in the community.
- **Schools are to stay open**

With this change in self-isolation measures, a number of the school's staffing team have had to self-isolate from today for the next 14 days; not because of showing any symptoms themselves, but due to living with family members that do. **With staffing numbers lowering, we have once again had to risk assess school events – knowing our limitations of what we can do whilst still operating in a functioning capacity.**

As of Wednesday March 18th 2020:

- No educational visits or sporting events offsite will take place until further notice
- No Year 5 & 6 visit as planned to William Morris Museum this Thursday
- No Reception STEM visit as planned
- No swimming lessons for year 3 at Davenant until further notice
- No non-essential visitors on our school site until further notice
- No collective worship invites to parents until further notice
- No staff led clubs after school until further notice
- No participation with our local church in hosting the Easter Egg Hunt event
- No Easter services for the pupils at our local church
- No governing meetings until further notice
- No PTA events until further notice

The school will refund any parent contributions made towards cancelled visits. These refunds will need to be given by cheques and the school office will contact you at a more appropriate time for you to come in and collect. At the moment, we are of course trying to limit the contact time our office staff have with the parent community for obvious transmission risks of the COVID-19 disease.

Other than these alterations, until instructed otherwise, or if the situation changes, the school will remain open and functioning with existing timings and be delivering all aspects of the National Curriculum.

As parents/carers you may make the decision to keep your children at home. Whilst we understand that this is your prerogative and empathise with any concerns you have for the health and wellbeing of your children, while we remain instructed to stay open, absences of this nature will have to be classified as '*unauthorised*' – as directed to us from the Local Authority.

Please use our Studybugs online absence reporting app as our preferred way for you to inform the school of not only a child absence, but also to give the reason for it.

The current situation continues to be both frustrating and concerning for us all and whilst we as school leaders (and many of us parents and carers for elderly relatives) may have our own opinions on how as a country we should be responding, we thank all our parents and community for your support and understanding as we continue to do the best for our children on a day to day basis.

We are ensuring all adults who enter the building are washing their hands and continue to do so throughout the day; and surfaces are being disinfected as appropriate.

We please ask that if you are aware of any confirmed cases of the virus in your family home to inform the school immediately and please keep your child(ren) at home.

For parents of pupils with pre-existing medical conditions, we advise that you contact the necessary health professionals and follow their guidance regarding attendance, if you have not done so already.

If your child has a fever or persistent cough please keep them at home. If children show signs of these in school your child will be isolated (in most cases), as advised by PHE, and you will be asked to come and collect them immediately.

The situation is changing rapidly and we as a school will continue to aim to respond appropriately. Thank you again for your understanding.

Yours sincerely,
Mr D. Bateman
Headteacher