

Middleton's Lane, Hellesdon
Norwich, NR6 5NF
Tel: 01603 426550
Fax: 01603 403361

Headteacher: Mrs R Robinson

www.firsideschool.norfolk.sch.uk
office@firsideschool.norfolk.sch.uk



Thursday 12 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you to update you on the developing situation surrounding the coronavirus. As a school, we will continue to follow the guidance issued by the Department for Education and Public Health England. As I write, we are awaiting an update from the government regarding their plans to move from the 'containment' to the 'delay' phase of their plans, as this will have possible consequences for schools.

Our current precautions

The main focus for both staff and pupils is good, basic hygiene. Using the Public Health England guidelines we are encouraging the children to wash their hands throughout the day. We are working hard to ensure that there is enough soap and hand towels available. Our cleaners, as well as doing their general cleaning duties, are focussing on making sure that areas such as toilets and sinks get extra attention. All waste bins are emptied every day and rubbish is disposed of responsibly.

We would ask that all parents who intend to travel abroad during the Easter holiday inform the school of their destination so that we are fully informed of the situation. We also ask that you follow the guidance about self-isolation on your return to the UK.

In terms of general coughs and colds there is no requirement to keep your child off school. However, if you are at all concerned you must seek medical advice through the 111 service and follow all their instructions regarding testing and self-isolation. Of course, we ask that you contact the school immediately if you have to take these steps.

Possible future developments

The government have issued statements about two possible future scenarios. Can I stress that these are future scenarios and **NOT** the current situation or advice.

Possible scenario 1

The possibility that anyone with coughs, colds and a high temperature will be asked to self-isolate for seven days, regardless of any other coronavirus symptoms being present.

Possible scenario 2

The possibility that schools will be asked to close for a period of time to help contain the spread of the virus.

Both of these possible scenarios will have implications for the school and parents. With this in mind we have made plans for the impact on the school.

Possible scenario 1 (NOT CURRENT SITUATION)

The main impact on the school will be if staff have to self-isolate rather than pupils. Staff have been asked to inform myself and Mrs Nickerson-White as soon as possible if they are unable to come into work. We hope that we will be able to keep the school functioning as normal but may have to reorganise teaching groups and support to ensure that all pupils can carry on with their learning.

If staff absence becomes too high to maintain a safe, normal working day we will prioritise our Year 6 pupils.

Should kitchen staff absences affect the provision of school meals we will notify all parents as soon as the situation is clear.

All updates will be made through the school app, the school website and the Norfolk schools closure site.

Again this is **NOT** the current situation but our contingency plan.

Possible scenario 2 (NOT CURRENT SITUATION)

The government may well make the decision to close schools for a period of time. The main challenge for us will be maintaining the continuity of education for all year groups. This will particularly important for Year 6 with exams coming up in the very near future.

In the event of this happening staff will issue work through the school app and website.

In relation to the Year 6 SATs exams, staff will let students know what areas they will need to focus on. I cannot at this stage say what will happen with the arrangements for SATs. Needless to say, we will follow any guidance from the Department for Education to the letter.

As you can see, as a school, we are making contingency plans to cover the possible scenarios and respond promptly to an ever changing and unpredictable situation. **Currently, we carry on as normal and encourage the children to engage with our hygiene routines.** As we receive more information and guidance from the government we will respond as quickly as possible and endeavour to keep you all informed.

If you have any questions please contact the school office via email. Please leave school phone lines open in order for staff to maintain the day-to-day running of the school.

Regards

Mrs R Robinson
Headteacher