

Headteacher
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National Support School
designated by



**National College for
Teaching & Leadership**

18.03.2020

Dear Mums, Dads and Carers,

This letter is a little bit longer because I wanted to make you aware of some of the other things we are now having to think about. It might seem like you've had a lot of letters, but I'd much rather you feel up to date. Thanks again for your support at this time and for doing all you can to follow the government guidance. I want to continue to be as open as I can with you about the situation as it changes so that you can think about your day to day arrangements.

We trust parents and staff to follow the new government guidance. The guidance states that 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 showed symptoms.

As you know, our staff and their children have to follow the same rules and it's going to cause a strain on the day to day running of the school if they are absent for two week periods. We already now have a significant number of staff off and we are still just about managing to run lessons as normal. But if we start to have much more of a staff shortage, it is likely to lead to a situation where we might not have enough cover to teach classes and provide adequate supervision. In this event, we have a graduated response planned and some of these we are already doing:

- Initially we will cancel/postpone meetings, PPA (teacher time to plan away from class) cover, off site trips and staff training to ensure we have the optimum available staff. This may mean some delay in meetings you have scheduled currently. Some of your meetings might be cancelled until further notice
- All extra-curricular clubs will cease as of Wednesday 18th March until further notice
- Breakfast club will continue but will be reviewed on a daily basis, we will keep you updated
- Staff responses to emails and calls will be slower than usual
- If we then are still overstretched, as more staff and children are absent, we may regroup classes
- If we still have insufficient staff we will close classes or year groups in the school. It may be that your child's class closes despite their teacher being in school as we will prioritise year groups with statutory tests. Year 6 will likely be the last year group to close

Headteacher

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- If so many staff are absent that we cannot adequately staff the school, then we will have to close the school (even if other schools are open) but this would be an absolute last resort and I will only do this if I am advised by TKAT that we have no other option

We will be setting work for children to complete, as outlined in the letter last week, and this is already available on our website under the 'learning from home' page and is being added to as we go. We are also making sure that paper packs and lists of activities that we started sending out last Friday 'just in case' will continue so that everyone gets one.

If you are unsure whether your child should attend school, please refer to the latest government guidance and if there are symptoms of a new persistent cough or raised temperature I would ask that you follow the advice in self-isolating your children as this will serve to protect the vulnerable relatives of other students and staff in school. Can I please ask that you avoid coming into the office unless it is extremely urgent as they are having to prioritise taking calls from parents reporting illness and this is a safeguarding priority.

I will continue to keep you updated of any changes in circumstances that may occur as quickly as I can and I thank you for your understanding around how fast things are moving.

The next few weeks look likely to be challenging but we will get through them if we work together.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Gosden
Headteacher