

17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have now published our procedures for preventing and managing Coronavirus on the School's website. We hope that you will find this a useful document in terms of clarifying the robust actions that we have put in place. As you are aware, the advice from the Department of Education, Public Health England and the NHS is being updated on a regular basis, and we are constantly reviewing our own practices in light of this.

The latest government guidance that is of immediate relevance to the School has indicated that:

- The government has not announced any plans for school closure at the moment
- If one person in any household has a persistent cough or fever, everyone living there must stay at home for 14 days. **Please could we ask that all parents / carers take the temperature of their child before coming into school in order to establish whether or not they have a fever. If they do, then your child must stay at home for 14 days**
- By next weekend, those with the most serious health conditions must be "largely shielded from social contact for around 12 weeks"
- There are some groups of people who may be more at risk of serious illness if they catch coronavirus. This group was defined last night as those suffering from a chronic illness, typically those who are advised to have the flu vaccine every year. But it is not thought these groups have a higher risk of catching coronavirus

<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>

- According to this document you are more at risk of serious illness if you catch coronavirus and you are:
  - Aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
  - Under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
    - Chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#), emphysema or [bronchitis](#)
    - Chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](#)
    - [Chronic kidney disease](#)
    - Chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](#)
    - Chronic neurological conditions, such as [Parkinson's disease](#), [motor neurone disease](#), [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
    - [Diabetes](#)
    - Problems with your spleen – for example, [sickle cell](#) disease or if you have had your spleen removed
    - A weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as [HIV and AIDS](#), or medicines such as [steroid tablets](#) or [chemotherapy](#)
    - Being seriously overweight (a BMI of 40 or above)
    - Those who are pregnant
    - If you have a weak immune system (immunosuppressed) that could be caused by:

- Cancer treatment
- Treatment for autoimmune diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, multiple sclerosis (MS) and inflammatory bowel diseases
- HIV
- Having an organ transplant or a bone-marrow transplant , or taking high doses of corticosteroids or other immunosuppressant medications
- This list is not definitive. For example, other lung viruses can cause severe illness in people who have a weak immune system. This is likely to be the same for coronavirus. For this reason, extra care needs to be taken for those with a weak immune system or pre-existing condition

**Based upon the above information, if you choose to keep your child / young adult at home to reduce the risk of them catching COVID-19 then we are happy to authorise the absence and have notified the Local Authority of this decision. Please do not however think that we are telling you not to send your child into School, this is entirely your decision based your knowledge of your child's needs and the current situation.**

**If you decide / have already made the decision to self-isolate your child, please can you arrange for any medication / specialist equipment that has been left on site to be collected.**

We continue to monitor the situation for our school community very closely and are working closely with the Local Authority in this respect.

- We can confirm that there have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 within our School community
- We have some staff and pupils self-isolating as a precaution but Public Health England have not informed us of any confirmed cases
  - On Monday 16/03/2020, 24 members of staff were absent due to illness and / or self isolation
  - On Tuesday 17/03/2020, 38 members of staff are absent due to illness and / or self isolation
- Teams across the school continue to problem solve the situation very carefully to cover absences today
- We are therefore open as normal until further notice. We know how challenging school closure can be and would never take this decision lightly
- However, as we are sure you appreciate, if staffing levels of individual class are reduced significantly in such a way as may compromise the safety of pupils, then classes / the School may need to be closed; we therefore ask that you are contactable at all times and you have in place contingency arrangements should this situation arise. Can you please ensure that your child's class teacher has your up to date telephone details and contact information
- Please continue to **report pupil absence via email [pupilabsence@five-acre.kent.sch.uk](mailto:pupilabsence@five-acre.kent.sch.uk)** as soon as you can to enable plans to be put in place each day

Thank you for the support you have provided us as we manage this rapidly changing situation with the Coronavirus.

Kind regards



Richard Dalton  
(Headteacher, Satellite Provision)



Tim Williams  
(Headteacher, Loose Site)