

26th February 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Public Health England yesterday (Tuesday 25 February) issued new guidance regarding Coronavirus (Covid-19) which revises the list of countries, or areas within specified countries, with implications for returning travellers and visitors arriving in the UK. Importantly, the countries and areas affected include regions of Northern Italy where we know some of our families may have travelled to during the half term break. Public Health England identify two categories of countries and areas with implications for returning travellers or UK visitors:

Category 1: Travellers should self-isolate, even if asymptomatic, and call NHS 111 to inform of recent travel.

Category 2: Travellers do not need to undertake any special measures, but if they develop symptoms they should self-isolate and call NHS 111.

It is important to stress that government guidance is therefore that students should continue to attend school unless they have travelled to a category 1 area and returned since 19 February, or if they have travelled to a category 2 area and have developed symptoms.

Category 1 Countries and Areas: If you have returned from these specific areas since 19 February, you should call NHS111 and stay indoors and avoid contact with other people even if you do not have symptoms:

- Iran
- Special care zones in South Korea as designated by the Government of the Republic of South Korea
- Hubei province (returned in the past 14 days)
- Specific lockdown areas of Northern Italy:
 - o Vo' Euganeo in the Veneto region, northern Italy
 - o The following towns in the Lombardy region, northern Italy:
 - Codogno
 - Castiglione d'Adda
 - Casalpusterlengo
 - Fombio
 - Maleo
 - Somaglia
 - Bertinico
 - Terranova dei Passerini
 - Castelgerundo
 - San Fiorano

Category 2 Countries and Areas: If you have returned from the areas below in the last 14 days and develop symptoms, however mild, you should stay indoors at home and avoid contact with other people immediately and call NHS111.

You do not need to follow this advice if you have no symptoms.

- Northern Italy excluding the towns above and Pisa, Florence and Rimini
- Cambodia
- China (excluding Hubei province)
- Laos
- Myanmar
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Macau
- Malaysia
- Republic of Korea
- Singapore
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam

Thank you for continued support and your calm and considered response to information we have sent out regarding the Coronavirus outbreak. We are being guided by Public Health England and further information is of course available on the government's website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>. We have also included additional information issued by Public Health England which may help address concerns you may have with the current situation.

Best wishes

Mrs S Price
Head Teacher

Public Health England Advice and Guidance

What is self-isolation?

Self-isolating is a precaution to provide people with health advice about any symptoms in case they become unwell. These people are being advised to “self-isolate” which means they should stay at home and avoid contact with other people as a precaution. It does not mean they are ill and people who have had contact with these individuals do not need to take action.

Those who have been told to ‘self-isolate’ are being asked to avoid other people and stay at home and not go to work or school. During this time, they will be supported by Public Health England, who are monitoring them and will undertake further testing if they show any symptoms of the virus, and provide any further care needed.

Should I send my child to school?

Yes. The safety, welfare and wellbeing of all in our school community is our primary concern and a constant dialogue has, and will continue, to take place with the relevant authorities to ensure that the school acts in accordance with guidance. We are working in collaboration with, and being guided by, the Local Authority and Public Health England to ensure that we are acting consistently with the right medical advice.

The Local Authority has confirmed to us that Public Health England and the office of the Chief Medical Officer are clear in their advice that schools do not need to close. Our school management team are following that guidance and are keeping our school open. I will continue to keep you updated with any advice that is passed to us.

At this present time, there is low risk for anyone attending our school. On advice from the Chief Medical Officer, the risk has been declared as "moderate" - a level which allows government to plan for all eventualities but that ultimately, that the risk to individuals remains "low".

Please contact the school if you are thinking about keeping your child at home.

Where do I get accurate information from?

Please also be aware that media speculation is rife about Coronavirus and not everything you read in the newspapers and online is accurate.

The release of trusted and accurate information will always be released initially by the Chief Medical Officer. Further guidance will then be issued by Public Health England, the Department for Health and Social Care or the NHS. The Local Authority will also support those messages.

You can find the latest information and advice from Public Health England at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

Everyone is being reminded to follow Public Health England advice:

- Like with other illnesses, coronavirus infection usually occurs through close contact with a person with novel coronavirus via cough and sneezes or hand contact.
- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands with soap and water
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.