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www.viewleyhillacademy.co.uk

Head Teacher: Mrs Helen Malbon



17th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Following our recent communications and guidelines received from the Government (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>), I am writing to you with further advice about the Coronavirus outbreak and our plans for the coming weeks and months. As I am sure you will understand, it is very difficult to predict what might happen. However, we have taken steps in school to plan, as best as we can, for future events and would appreciate your support and understanding during this challenging time.

Raising Awareness

Children are being reminded, sensitively so as to avoid alarm, about the virus and the steps they should take to help prevent or delay its spread; primarily following NHS and Government advice and washing their hands regularly.

Hand Sanitisers/Hand Washing

Although there is a shortage of sanitiser, we have a significant amount of cleaning materials, hand wash and tissues/toilet roll in school.

General Cleaning

We will be prioritising certain areas of the building for more regular cleaning, particularly the dining halls and toilets. We have liaised with our cleaning contractors and intend to pay additional attention to all contact surfaces.

School Trips/Clubs

Should a trip, club or specific activity need to be cancelled, we will contact you to confirm that this is the case.

Staff Absence

It is possible that for a period of time, the school will be open but a higher than usual number of staff may be absent. We will do everything to remain open, however, it may be necessary to open partially for some year groups or have larger than usual class sizes.

School Closure

The Government is planning for a range of future scenarios, one of which includes a temporary school closure. **DfE has communicated the following to schools:**

Current advice remains in place: no education or children's social care setting should close in response to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case unless advised to do so by Public Health England.

The Chief Medical Officer has advised that the impact of closing schools on both children's education and on the workforce would be substantial, but the benefit to public health may not be. Decisions on future advice

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to education or children's social care settings will be taken based on the latest and best scientific evidence, which at this stage suggests children are a lower risk group.

However, we are aware that this is a fast changing situation with schools in other European countries closing with very little notice given. Should this happen to us, please note the following:

- We will provide up to date information through Marvellous Me, Text Message, our website and Twitter:
 - website: www.viewleyhill.org.uk
 - twitter: @ViewleyHill
- Essential business functions will operate remotely to ensure the school is ready to return to normal business as soon as appropriate.

Information about the virus (taken from Government Guidance)

This information is readily available but is worth repeating. A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2-14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected. Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have been reported in children.

Further Advice for Parents

As I said earlier, this is a fast-moving situation. For parents/carers wishing to keep up to date with the latest situation, I would advise accessing the Gov.uk website.

There will be a number of pupils, staff and your own family members with suppressed immune systems. You know best how you can stay safe, please take advice from 111 and Government websites.

Finally, a personal request for your continued support. It is impossible to keep everyone happy with any decision regarding school closure or other significant interventions. Our resources may be stretched for some time so please try to avoid any complaints or criticism, particularly on social media. If you do have a serious concern, contact the school directly and we will try our best to assist. Please be assured that we will continue to do our very best for your children.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Malbon
Headteacher

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