

St Mary's C.E. Primary School

Rectory Gardens, London N8 7QN Tel: 020 8340 4898 E-mail: office@stmarysn8.co.uk

Headteacher: Mr Calvin Henry



13th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing regarding what our school is doing in relation to the Coronavirus.

We receive regular updates from Haringey, the London Diocesan Board for Schools, the Department for Education and Public Health England and we act on these as appropriate and will continue to update you as information comes in.

Current status - Following yesterday's government announcement the school will remain open until we hear otherwise. Coronavirus is thought to cause only a mild illness in children and young people, and it is important to remind ourselves of this.

Main focus - Our main focus currently is ensuring good hygiene habits to minimize any spread of infection. This entails:

- Ensuring children and staff regularly wash their hands and teaching the children the '20 second rule' (e.g by singing Happy Birthday twice)
- The use of tissues for sneezing or blowing noses and then disposing of these in a bin. If you are able to donate any tissues to your child's class, this will be greatly appreciated.
- Ensuring rigorous cleaning procedures are followed, especially in key areas around the school.

Contingency plans - We are actively making contingency plans for if the situation does change in the coming weeks. These entail:

- Planning for significant staff shortages, either due to illness or the need for individuals to self-isolate. We will endeavour to keep the school open even in the event of multiple staff absence.
- Planning additional precautionary measures such as cancelling trips or clubs, requiring children to bring packed lunch, splitting or combining classes and avoiding very large gatherings such as assemblies.

We hope the above contingency plans will not be needed, however, I feel it is important to inform you of actions which may need to be taken.

Updated Advice - Please note the updated advice from Haringey, relevant for people who are unwell with a fever or cough. Heeding this advice will slow spread of the infection and is important in protecting those around us. The new advice is as follows:

1. Anyone (pupil or staff member) with a fever or persistent cough should not be in school and should self-isolate for 7 days from the time of onset of symptoms or for longer if symptoms are still present after 7 days.

People are not expected to call 111 unless:

- a. they feel they cannot cope with symptoms at home
- b. the condition gets worse
- c. symptoms do not get better after 7 days

People will not routinely be tested

Advice on self-isolation is below

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>

2. People should continue to focus on good hand hygiene as emphasised in previous briefings
3. School trips abroad are not advised (our Y5 Paris trip has been postponed)

Children with underlying health conditions - I understand parents and carers will have concerns where they have children with underlying health conditions. At present there is no advice that these children should be away from school. We will let you know if the advice changes. Parents of children with underlying conditions may want to get advice from their health professionals about this.

School closure - I am also currently planning for what would happen if all schools, including St Mary's, had to close. Please note that we would only close if directed to do so by Public Health England and we would notify you immediately if this happens by email, text and website update.

What you should do in the meantime:

- If your child suffers from a respiratory disease (e.g asthma), ensure that the school is provided with up to date medication
- Continue to reinforce that your child is regularly washing their hands using the 20 second rule – see Youtube link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQCP7waTRWU&feature=youtu.be>
- Keep children off from school if they are unwell until they have fully recovered and communicate this via the school office (020 8340 4898) or email: swalker@stmarysn8.co.uk (RG) or lchristou@stmarysn8.co.uk (CL)
- **If your child has a fever or persistent cough they should stay off school and self-isolate for 7 days from the time of onset of symptoms or for longer if symptoms are still present after 7 days.**
- Inform the school immediately if you are self-isolating and/or have contacted NHS 111 per the guidance above
- If you have recently travelled, please check the link below which is the government's action plan for up to date information relating to this

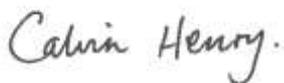
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/869827/Coronavirus_action_plan_-_a_guide_to_what_you_can_expect_across_the_UK.pdf.

- The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about Covid-19 relating to education and children's social care. Parents and carers can contact this helpline on 0800 046 8687. Opening hours: 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

To conclude, please ensure that the school office has your most current contact information and be assured that that we will continue to do our utmost to safeguard our school community.

I will write to you again if there are any significant changes to the above.

Yours sincerely



Calvin Henry
Headteacher

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