



Greenway Primary
& Nursery School



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Head Teacher: Katharine Ellwood

Sunday 15 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carers

Coronavirus Update

On Thursday 12 March the Government announced some new measures to deal with COVID-19 and also a change to its overall response, moving from the 'contain' to the 'delay' phase of its plan.

As before, the advice remains that effective hand hygiene and using a tissue when coughing or sneezing are some of the most effective ways in which we can all help reduce the spread of the virus. The school is continuing to do all that it can to minimise the spread with good hygiene and is following all the advice from Public Health and Herts County Council and as such we believe there is no additional risk to children and staff.

We are ensuring that all visitors entering the school use hand sanitizer or wash their hands immediately on passing through the foyer into the main building.

Self-isolation and staying at home

As you know the Government has widened their advice on who should self-isolate to include anyone who has coronavirus like symptoms ie a new or continuous cough or a high temperature (37.8 degrees), however mild, should stay at home for at least 7 days to protect others and help slow the spread of the disease.

All our staff will be expected to follow this advice, and we ask you to ensure that your children do so too. If your children are absent from school because they are ill please continue to call or email admin@greenway.herts.sch.uk explaining why they are absent from school.

In certain circumstances you may be advised by medical professionals to keep your children at home even if they are not unwell. If this is the case, please let us know and we will support your decision.

We fully understand that parents are concerned about the risk of their children catching coronavirus and that some may wish to keep their children at home even though they have not had any medical advice to do so. However, we

cannot agree to a child's absence for that reason alone. All children who are well enough to come to school are expected to continue attending as normal unless advised otherwise by Public Health England.

The possibility of school closure

Some parents have asked whether we could choose to close the school now. If we are ordered to close the school by Public Health England, because there is a risk to children and staff or if the Government decides to close all schools we will do so. Otherwise our intention is to stay open and operate as normal. This is based on the clear advice from the Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government, Sir Patrick Vallance, on how best to manage this epidemic. We are sure that you will be supportive of this.

We are however preparing in the event that the school closes and we are looking at ways for managing a remote curriculum which will be effective and manageable for staff, children and parents. We recognise that if closure is necessary this will have significant implications for some of our families with issues including the loss of free school meals to problems for families finding suitable childcare.

Keeping informed

Obviously, we will continue to provide updates as the situation continues to develop and would ask that you inform the school of any contact your family may have had with a person with symptoms or who has tested positive.

Despite not having been to one of the areas identified by the Government or having knowingly been in contact with an individual with coronavirus Mr Lewis was off work last week as he had a high temperature. He followed Public Health guidance and self-isolated. It was confirmed that he had tonsillitis and is now well enough to return to work this week.

Thank you for your continued support.

Regards

Katharine Ellwood
Headteacher

Elizabeth O'Reilly
Chair of Governors

