



We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together

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Dear Parents and Carers

You will have seen the news that the government yesterday 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 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, Herts County Council and the Diocese of Westminster and as such we believe that we have robust plans in place to deal with a number of potential eventualities.

Today the staff team, led by the Senior Leadership Team, contributed to an **updating of our COVID-19 Risk Assessment**. In order that you can be assured that we have planned effectively, I have taken the unusual step of making a version of this Risk Assessment publicly available to you. I do hope that this reassures you. The risk assessment has been sent out with this letter.

There are some important aspects that are worth reinforcing as follows:-

Self-isolation and staying at home

As you know the **government has widened their advice on who should self-isolate to include those that have coronavirus like symptoms - a new or continuous cough or a high temperature (37.8 degrees plus), 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 contact the school in the usual manner.

In certain circumstances you may be advised by medical professionals to keep your child at home even if they are not unwell. If this is the case please let us know and we will support your decision. I understand that parents are concerned about the risk of their children catching Coronavirus and that some may wish to keep children at home even though they have not had any medical advice to do so. In such circumstances, if you are concerned, please do make contact with me so that we can discuss the situation. As a rule of thumb, children who are well enough to come to school are expected to continue attending as normal unless advised otherwise by Public Health England / a medical professional.

School Trips

There has been updated guidance on school trips and the government has advised that planned school trips outside the UK should not go ahead. The government advice is that school trips within the UK can at present go ahead safely. As the COVID-19 situation in the UK is changing rapidly we will review the



risk assessment for each trip before it goes ahead. However, if you do have a concern, please do make contact.

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/students and staff we will do so. Equally, If the government make a decision to close all schools, we will do so. Otherwise our intention is to stay open and operate as normal. The Government has made it clear that it expects schools to remain open unless public health advice has been given to close. 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.

Absence of staff due to self-isolating could lead to either a partial or full closure of the school if not enough staff are available to ensure the safe operation of the school day. The school is currently drawing up plans to assist with decisions in relation to this.

We are, however, preparing in case the school closes and we are looking at ways for managing a remote curriculum. We recognise that if closure is necessary this will have significant implications for many of our families with issues ranging from the loss of free school means 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.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Jon White
Headteacher

