

Important information regarding latest coronavirus guidance

Friday 6th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are sure you are all aware that England entered a second National lockdown on Thursday 5th November. We have consulted the most recent guidance regarding the new national restrictions and have made some changes to our school risk assessment as a result.

Please ensure you read on to find out what these changes are. There have been no further updates regarding guidance for education, if further guidance is published, we will share with you at the earliest opportunity. The news regarding a second National lockdown did somewhat prove unsettling at the end of the half term break, and some of the children have found it worrying, but on the whole they have settled back in to school extremely well. We acknowledge that this is a difficult time for parents and carers as you may be experiencing many worries and concerns, including worrying about your child/ren whilst they are at school. We continue to implement all the mitigating factors such as; good respiratory hygiene, enhanced cleaning and hand washing.

Currently there are no plans to close schools as part of the National lockdown restrictions. The Government has also stated that they expect children to still attend school. Please do continue to send your child/ren to school, if they are well enough to attend and are not self-isolating. Please read on to read our Q&A.

Thank you, as always, for your co-operation, and support, and for all of the kind words you send to us – it is all very much appreciated!

Annette Hixon

Head teacher

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if my child is unwell?

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- ☒ a new continuous cough
- ☒ a high temperature
- ☒ a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from the nhs.uk website at

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>.

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

If your child is unwell with any symptoms, we request at this time that you keep your child off school. This will prevent our staff from catching illnesses that may stop them from working. If your child presents as unwell in school, the office will ask you to collect them as a precaution. Please support the school with this to protect our community.

What will happen if my child's class teacher needs to isolate?

We will ensure teachers are covered in their absence, with either a regular supply teacher or teaching assistants. If the teacher is well they will carry out virtual lessons and interventions with their class. A Marvellous Me message and a follow-up letter will be sent to parents and carers as soon as possible.

What do parents and carers do if they are concerned their child is showing symptoms or is generally unwell?

If, during the school day, you are informed of a positive test result for you or a family member/close contact of your child, contact us immediately and we will arrange for your young person to come out of lessons and wait safely to be collected from school. They will need to follow the same rules for close contacts of positive cases, which is self-isolation for 14 days.

Will parents be able to keep their child home to protect a vulnerable family member who was previously shielding?

No, the government has said children MUST come to school. The school has put in a lot of measures to mitigate and reduce the risk of transmitting the disease. If you feel the school needs to take further measures to support your child coming in to school safely, please contact Karen Allen to discuss your concerns.

If my child is clinically extremely vulnerable, can I keep them at home?

Yes, please contact the school if you feel your child fits in to this category. The school will require medical evidence.

Will the school provide work for children if parents choose to keep their child off school?

No, parents have a legal obligation to send their child to school to receive education on site. Only children isolating because they are waiting for test results, or who have been in contact with someone who has tested positive, have permission to stay at home and will be provided with learning.

How will the school record attendance?

Where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as normally would happen, the pupil should be recorded as absent in the attendance register and the school will authorise the absence.

Where a pupil is in self-isolation, in accordance with latest information and advice from Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England, the pupil will be recorded as unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances in the attendance register.

Where a pupil's parent/guardian refuses to send them to school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence in the attendance register. Under the current guidance from the Government, if this absence continues this could lead to a fixed penalty notice and even prosecution

If there is a positive case in a bubble, would the whole bubble automatically have to isolate or would it only be close contacts?

The school would liaise with Public Health England, and currently only pupils who have been in close contact with this pupil will be required to self-isolate. Your communication is key. We will discuss with the parent all possible close contacts from any social activities, break times, clubs and out of school time.

What will be the main communication tool for parents to teachers if the school closes/ if teacher is self-isolating etc?

Teachers will use Marvellous Me and Google classroom as the main way to communicate with their pupils. There is also the option for pupils to talk with their teacher through Reading plus.

How is the school reducing the risk of transmission between bubbles?

The school already has put a robust Risk assessment in place to reduce transmission between bubbles, such as staggered start of day, break and lunchtimes, separate toilets, one way systems and limited use of communal spaces

How much interaction and face-to-face teaching will be provided if classes/year groups revert to learning from home?

We have published a flow chart and information for home learning, which is part of every weekly communication: please look on our website for further details.

Why has the decision been taken for children to stop wearing masks when the cases in the community are increasing?

Government guidance currently states that children under the age of 11 do not need to wear a face mask due to the mitigating factors put in place by schools under their risk assessments. We continue to ensure social distancing around the school and on the playground.

What would happen if a child/member of staff tests positive?

Communication is key. Parents must phone the school or use the office@ email address to inform the school. The school will inform Public Health, the Local Authority and HAMWIC, and will assess which pupils and staff would need to self-isolate. The school will contact parents and carers and ask them to collect their child immediately. The rest of the school will be informed of the positive case by letter the same day.

Will the classroom windows be kept open throughout winter?

Ventilation is very important in the classrooms; all windows will be kept open. Children are allowed to wear a black or white long sleeved top under their sports top or school T shirt.

What is the approach for staff who work across multiple classes/bubbles when a bubble needs to isolate due to a confirmed case?

Any staff member who teaches across bubbles is maintaining social distancing, wearing a face mask and does not come in contact with any furniture or resources in the classroom. Regular cleaning of tables continues throughout the day. Teaching assistants work one-to-one with pupils outside of the classroom in well-ventilated spaces. They wear masks and use a screen to protect themselves and the pupils. Areas are cleaned down in between pupils. This means that staff who work across bubbles in this way are protected and will not be required to isolate in the event of a confirmed case.

Will music lessons continue?

At this time music lessons will continue; the music teachers adhere to the school's Risk assessment and there has been a lot of communication to ensure that music lessons are carried out in a manner that minimises risk . If you would prefer your individual child's lesson to stop, please contact the school office

Will school trips go ahead?

We have two planned trips this term; the trip to Butser Farm is able to go ahead as planned and we are confident that the farm has a full risk assessment in place to minimise risk. The Year 5 Sea City Museum trip will take place virtually in school next week. No other trips will be arranged at this time.

Will after school clubs continue?

At this time all extra-curricular clubs have been suspended. Before-school care will continue, in order to support parents' ability to get to work.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19:

Do

- ☑ wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- ☑ use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- ☑ wash your hands as soon as you get home
- ☑ cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- ☑ put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

Further Information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>