

## St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

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16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

### Coronavirus Update

Due to the high volume of media coverage around the Coronavirus, a number of parents / carers have asked specifically about the measures we have in place currently and what would happen if we did ever get a confirmed case in school. Therefore, we thought it would be helpful to explain what we are currently doing and what we would do in the event of a potential closure.

Firstly, we are receiving daily advice and guidance from the DfE and Public Health England. We will continue to follow the national guidelines on how to respond to any suspected/confirmed cases of Covid-19 Coronavirus. Whilst we need to be aware of the current situation, we also need to ensure a proportionate response. Therefore, the Durham Diocesan Multi Academy Trust have reviewed our emergency plans and developed contingencies should we have to close or partially close due to government instruction. In the event of any closure, partial or full we will use our official local media stations, contact you via a messages using SchoolPing, on our Facebook page and our school website. *Most importantly, we remain open and hope for excellent attendance unless you hear otherwise via one of the above methods.*

We would like to reassure you that we are taking the concerns in our community seriously and that we are taking proportionate and proactive approaches, these are:

### What are we currently doing to reduce the chances of the virus getting into school?

- We are closely monitoring the local and national picture
- We are liaising with the Local Authority and with the Department for Education and Public Health England on a regular basis
- We are teaching the children best hygiene practice and have sent information out to parents / carers and are encouraging frequent hand washing
- Our cleaning team has increased the cleaning on key touch points (handles, doors, rails etc.) and are using anti-viral products
- Every classroom is cleaned daily
- We are monitoring daily, any child or staff absence and are asking about any symptoms they may have and advising accordingly
- We are adapting any activities, which have an increased potential of the spreading of virus e.g. food tasting, educational /sporting visits etc.

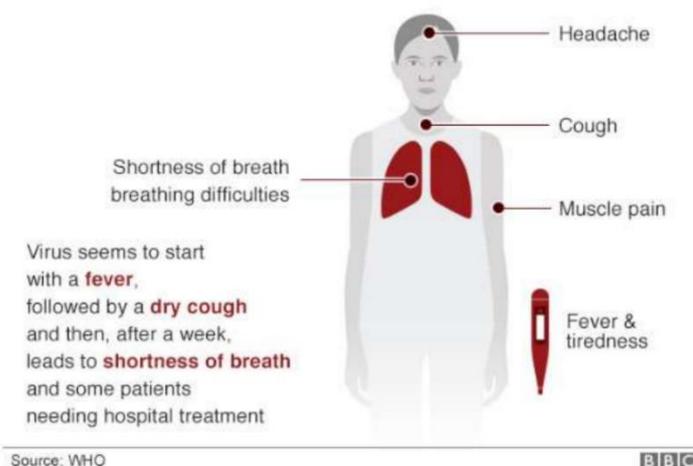
## What will we do if there is a confirmed case in one of our schools?

- We will immediately contact the Academy, Local Authority, and take advice from them, Public Health England and the guidance in place at that time from the World Health Organisation
- We will then make a decision as to what needs to happen
- We will ensure we communicate as promptly as possible and keep you well informed.

## What if my child has any symptoms?

- If you have concerns about your child's health in relation to the Coronavirus please ring the NHS on 111. *The general advice is to not attend medical centres.* Coronavirus seems to start with a fever, followed by a dry cough and after a week, it leads to shortness of breath with some patients requiring hospital treatment.
- In addition we would highlight the recent Government guidance which is clear that pupils should not come into school for 7 days from the point at which they first show any sign of one or more of the following symptoms:
  - a) Fever (37.8 degrees or above)
  - b) a new dry cough
  - c) Shortness of breath
- If your child begins to display any of these symptoms during the school day, you will be contacted and asked to collect your child as soon as possible, and to observe the 7-day self-isolation guidance. We would thank you for your understanding and support with this, as this will limit the spread of infection. The safety of all our pupils is paramount and we are particularly mindful of those with underlying respiratory issues and those with low immunity.
- If any of these symptoms are present or you are worried in any way that you or your child may have contracted coronavirus you should contact NHS 111 immediately to seek advice. Please then notify the school about the action you have been asked to take including self-isolation

### Symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19)



The information for schools is published on the Public Health England website. You can access more information on Coronavirus and the current actions at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public> and the educational settings guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educationalsettings-about-covid-19>

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

### **What we are doing in the event of a potential closure?**

As stated within this letter, we are doing our utmost to ensure that we avoid any closure, partial or full. However, we felt that it was prudent to allow you the opportunity to view and feedback to us, prior to a potential closure, on the strategies that we are planning to implement if the situation arises. In the event of a closure, we will endeavour to ensure the best possible education is given to your child.

### **How will the school communicate during closure periods?**

We will provide updates via SchoolPing and through the school website as the situation changes. Updates will also be provided on our social media feeds via our Facebook page.

If you need to contact the school please email: [stmarys@sbcschools.org.uk](mailto:stmarys@sbcschools.org.uk)

As we further refine this plan and in the event of having to use it we will send out further information. I know that this is a difficult time but I hope that this letter provides you with some comfort that we are being pro-active in making the best possible preparations to both avoid and being prepared for future possibilities.

In the meantime, we continue to operate a full and normal school day.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

**Mrs E Robertson**  
**Head Teacher**