

Headteacher: Andrew Denham

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Friday 18th September

Dear Parents,

Many of you will be aware of the challenges, frustrations, and confusion with COVID testing, track and trace and the different actions you should take if one or other of your family has symptoms, is ill with coronavirus or comes into contact with someone who has symptoms or the virus.

Families are presenting us with a different 'covid scenarios' most days and we are trying our best to make the best decision for the child, family and school with the available information and guidance that we have, including these key indicators:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

We also refer to the latest NHS information and advice:

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

Alongside this, schools have a Department for Education Help line to call and we can (and do) call Public Health England to discuss our responses.

As well as this, we have to add in the contextual understanding of different factors that may, on the face of it, not appear obvious to those looking at it from 'outside'. Some guidance is not always clear, and we are having to make a judgement call on the day, taking into account all of the above factors.

The school will not comment on information related to an individual and/or family's situation nor confirm or refute rumours that may be circulating, unless it is a detriment to the work we are doing.

In summary, we are facing a very challenging time with the decisions we are having to make each day and want to reassure you that we are doing the best we can to keep people safe, the school running and children learning.

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Children are going to be off at different times while awaiting test outcomes or having to isolate for different reasons. As I am sure you can all appreciate, this is a practical and logistical challenge for teachers to manage so we are not going to be able to produce individual work for children in response to every absence.

We plan to take the following approach:

Scenario	Teaching and Learning Response
Child is absent from school for a couple of days for a 'COVID related' issue e.g. awaiting test result	Child completes Home Learning (Homework) tasks they have not already completed, daily reading, practice times tables and spellings
A teacher is absent from school for a couple of days for a 'COVID related' issue e.g. awaiting test result	The teacher will teach remotely for parts of the the day from their home via Google Classroom with staff in school working alongside the children in the classroom
Child is absent from school for 10-14 days because they are having to isolate, not necessarily because they have the virus.	Teachers will send home a 'generic' Learning Pack with some instructions
Class bubble needs to close, following the advice of Public Health England, because a child or staff member has coronavirus	Day 1: Children complete Home Learning (Homework) tasks they have not done yet, daily reading, practice times tables and spellings Day 2: Online Home Learning begins, using Google Classroom

Note: This is the response to 'COVID' scenarios. If a child is poorly for other reasons, we would expect parents to help them rest and recuperate as normal, until they are well enough to return.

In preparation for a possible return to home/online learning the teachers will be setting the children an online Home Learning task on Google Classrooms this week. The children are being asked to take a picture of themselves 'extreme reading' and share it on the Google Classroom. We hope this task will remind children/families of how to use Google Classroom and enable us to address any technical issues.

The classes continue to be in 'bubbles' during lesson times but two classes share the same break and lunchtime on the field or playground and some of the classes are sharing the hall to eat their lunch: Murphy (N/R) and Donaldson (Y1), Blake (Y2) and Dahl (Y3), and Morpurgo (Y4/5) and Shakespeare (Y5/6). During the shared times, the bubbles remain apart e.g. separate parts of the field/playground and hall.

We are envisaging that we are going to have staff absences over the coming term/year and are already facing some practical challenges when someone is away. To ensure that we keep the bubbles 'open', some staff will need to work across the 'two bubble system' that is set up for break and lunchtimes. There may be some very rare occasions when we have no choice but for staff to move across more than two bubbles so that we can keep the bubble open.

We will seek the advice of Public Health England should a child or staff member become ill with the virus and the actions we need to take for the class bubble and the bubble that shares a break or lunchtime. Parents need to be prepared that we may need to close more than one bubble at a time. **Closing a class bubble will be our absolute last resort.**

Thank-you for your understanding of the challenges we are facing at the moment and that there needs to be flexibility and adjustments on an ongoing basis.

Kind regards,
 Andrew Denham