

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



HEAD TEACHER: MRS. A. D. THORPE

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: MRS. C. HORSLEY

Front Street, Stanley, Co. Durham. DH9 0NP

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Website: www.stanley-pri.durham.sch.uk

16th March 2020

Dear parent/carer,

Re: Coronavirus

I am writing to update you about the school's current position regarding Coronavirus.

Both the Headteacher and Governors take the health and safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff very seriously, and, as such, we want to reassure you that we are following the guidance from Public Health England and the Department for Education (DfE).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

The Local Authority is advising us that the risk is currently low in County Durham, however to minimise the spread of any infection in school we are:

- Ensuring every child washes their hands with school soap and water at regular intervals during the day for at least 20 seconds:
 - First thing in the morning
 - Breaktime
 - Before lunch
 - After lunch
 - Afternoon breaktime
 - Before they leave to go home
- Maintaining the on-going high standards of cleaning by the cleaner and the caretaker
- New awareness posters are in place around school
- Minimizing the number of outside visitors into school and ensuring that they all wash their hands on arrival

As you may be aware, we have the following whole school events planned this week which we have decided to cancel as a precautionary measure:

- Mother's Day lunch on Wednesday 18th March is cancelled due to the high number of grandparents who attend
- Mass on Thursday 19th March is cancelled as there are a high number of elderly parishioners who attend mass



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Additionally, as a precaution the following is also happening:

- Swimming for Year 5 is cancelled for the next three weeks as a precaution
- After school clubs are currently running, however, we will revise the provision as necessary following guidance
- We are working closely with local agencies to support foodbanks and any families in need. Please inform us if you are a family in need of support at this challenging time and we will work to put you in touch with agencies who can help

The current advice is that schools cancel visits abroad. We will review and monitor all of our planned class trips and update you accordingly as they arise. We will be constantly monitoring the advice from the DfE and central government and I will update you as frequently as possible.

If circumstances arise where the school must close, we will inform you in our usual way, through the Teachers to Parents and the Local Durham School Closures website. We are currently making plans for supporting your child's education should a closure become necessary and will keep you informed on this. We are putting packs together for children to work on at home including projects and access to revision materials through websites and online logins. We will do our best to ensure that these are either free or school will pay for and provide a login.

Prevent the spread of infection

Make sure you and your children follow these general principles to prevent spreading any respiratory virus:

- Wash your hands often – with soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based sanitiser if soap and water aren't available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- If you feel unwell, stay at home and don't attend work or school
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then place the tissue in a bin and then wash your hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home
- If you're worried about your symptoms, please call NHS 111 – don't go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment

The most recent UK government advice (12.03.2020) is that anyone with a **new continuous cough and a high temperature should self-isolate for seven days.**



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If you or your children have returned from abroad in the last 14 days, please follow the link below for advice about category 1 and 2 countries.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk>

Symptoms to look out for

If you've returned from any of the category 1 or 2 areas or countries, look out for the following symptoms:

- Cough
- Difficulty in breathing
- Fever (a temperature of 38 degrees C or higher)
- Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with other flu viruses. Please see the link below for information about self-isolation.
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation-for-patients-undergoing-testing/advice-sheet-home-isolation>
- Call NHS 111 immediately for an assessment (or 999 if you require emergency medical attention)

As I mentioned, we are following the guidance from Public Health England and the DfE, but this is being updated regularly in response to the changing situation. We will monitor and follow the national guidance as it is updated and would urge you to do the same.

If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

As always, I appreciate and thank you for your continued support as we work together through these changing times.

Yours sincerely,

A D Thorpe

Mrs A D Thorpe
Headteacher

