

The Coppice Primary School

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Covid-19 update

Dear Parents/Carers,

There are a number of things to share. First of all, we have had a few parents enquiring about school closure. Enough has been said in the press about this. It does seem likely that Easter holidays might be extended but this will only happen if we are directed to do so by government. However, there might come a time when we are under pressure to close, independently, if we have a case of the virus in school or have staff shortages.

Regarding infection in school, if we did have a confirmed incident in school, then we would immediately close (or have partial closure, dependent on circumstance) for a three-day period. Hopefully, this period would overlap a weekend, affecting just one school day. The three day closure would enable us to undertake a deep clean. Also, it would be a belt-and-braces measure because it is recognised that the virus does not survive beyond three days on any surface. In the meantime, cleaners have been told to focus on regularly disinfecting 'high touch points' (e.g. door handles) as a matter of course.

Obviously, before deciding on any closure, we would be advised by government bodies like PHE (Public Health England) and the DFE (Department for Education). Rest-assured, we certainly would not close as a knee-jerk reaction to anything; The Coppice has a very good track record of 'staying open' (we have been the very last school left standing regarding snow closures).











Already, we have put together a contingency plan regarding 'distance learning' (staff are receiving associated training this week). Also, we have alternative plans where internet access is not viable.

Please do keep giving clear messages to children (as we do) that they should avoid touching their faces and should regularly wash hands (a key time for this might be directly after they return from school).

We understand there will be some concern about when a child should be kept away from school. We are following the government advice, therefore:

- If your child has a new continuous cough or a fever (one of the common symptoms in the table below) we request you keep your child at home for 7 days from the onset of the symptoms.
- If your child has any of the symptoms listed as 'sometimes' below, we request that you keep your child off on the day of the symptom. If it has cleared by the following day they are able to come to school. However, if the symptom persists, the child should be kept at home for 7 days.

- If your child has only a stuffy or runny nose (listed 'rare' below) without any other symptom, they are able to come to school.
- The policy for diarrhoea and sickness remains the same – please keep the child at home for 48 hours after the last incident of sickness / diarrhoea.

HAVE I GOT A COLD, FLU OR COVID-19?			
SYMPTOMS	CORONAVIRUS	COLD	FLU
 FEVER	Common	Rare	Common
 FATIGUE	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
 COUGH	Common (usually dry)	Mild	Common (usually dry)
 SNEEZING	No	Common	No
 ACHES & PAINS	Sometimes	Common	Common
 RUNNY OR STUFFY NOSE	Rare	Common	Sometimes
 SORE THROAT	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
 DIARRHOEA	Rare	No	Sometimes for children
 HEADACHES	Sometimes	Rare	Common
 SHORTNESS OF BREATH	Sometimes	No	No

Please rest assured that we have the same policy for all staff on site.

Although we very much value all the support provided by our parents, at this time, we respectfully request that parents do not enter the school building until further notice. All parent help in classes is therefore suspended until further notice.

If the school is forced to close, further information will be issued regarding working from home. However, in the meantime, if your child is at home, we would ask you to regularly check your year group newsletter on the school website which will guide you on which topics your child is covering in class in order that they can carry out continued independent research in these areas. Also, Athletics, Spellodrome, Purple Mash and reading are always available for home working.

We still need to keep a perspective on things. At the time of writing, there are only a few recorded cases of the virus in Worcestershire and the surrounding areas. However, I reiterate advice from my last letter, once the virus gains a foothold in the wider community, families with vulnerable members do need to make their own decisions over whether to send children to school or not. Otherwise, at present, we will expect all children to keep attending as normal.

Yours sincerely

Bill Heptinstall

