



March 17th 2020

Re Coronavirus concerns

I trust that everyone is keeping up to date with the information about Coronavirus and its impact on our community. I am receiving updates daily from Bury Council, and the school is following all guidelines we receive.

As it stands, **the current direction is for schools to remain open**, however we are having to react to new guidelines almost daily and it is therefore important that you take advice from Public Health England if you have concerns regarding your children or indeed anyone within your household:

www.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health

Following on from yesterday's announcement made by the Prime Minister (March 16th), a number of significant changes have been introduced which will impact on schools. The key changes include measures to ensure that family members of individuals who are displaying symptoms of coronavirus also self-isolate, and means that where one family member displays symptoms, whole families will now need to self-isolate for a period of 14 days. Ultimately, it is for parents/carers to decide on the appropriate approach for their family.

As already stated, Heaton Park Primary School is remaining open, however we have to acknowledge that a situation may arise whereby selective classes may have to be re-organised or close because of staffing levels. Equally, in the event of a government directed school closure, contingency plans are being prepared in terms of how pupils can access learning via online platforms. In any event, communication is likely to be via text message in the first instance so please ensure school has current mobile contact numbers.

Please continue with good hygiene practices at home, as we are doing within school:

- Wash your hands often – with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or 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 sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home

If you are worried about your symptoms, please call NHS 111 – do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

We feel it is very important that your children do not see your own anxiety about the virus. If your child is anxious and worried – listen to them and calmly discuss their fears. Explain that there are many different viruses like colds and flu and that this is another one. Reassure them that the majority of people who have the virus only have mild symptoms and recover quickly. This is the message we are delivering at school.

Lastly, the national guidance remains clear in the value of schools remaining open. I ask for your support, and perseverance in striving for this, and know that the Heaton Park Primary School Community will continue to support each other in what is a very challenging period.

Best wishes, Mr P Lord.



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