



FAIRLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pound Avenue
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 3JA

13 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Following on from the government's announcement yesterday, I would like to give some further information in relation to coronavirus.

Self-isolation

The announcement was that if **anyone has symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started.** This includes:

- new cough and/or
- high temperature

If this applies to your child, please **DO NOT** send them into school. This will be recorded as an **approved absence for exceptional circumstances**. You should then follow the self-isolation guidance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

This link also gives really clear advice about when it is OK to end self-isolation. It says:

You should remain at home until 7 days after the onset of your symptoms. After 7 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, you should contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111.

Cough may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days.

The government has made it clear that they know that this is going to cause significant disruption to families, but it is the best thing we can all do to help to protect our children, friends, colleagues and the wider community by helping control the spread of the virus.

The school office and staff will be available to help you talk through your individual circumstances. Please call 01438 351053 or email admin@fairlands.herts.sch.uk

School closure

At present, there is no government direction to close all schools in England so **we will be making our best endeavours to remain open and carry on as usual.**

However, it is only right that I make it clear to parents and carers that the self-isolation strategy described above is already having an impact on our ability to keep the school open and running safely. Even on the

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first day of this new strategy, we already have a number of teachers and other staff self-isolating and it has been a real challenge to find supply teachers, cover classes, and keep the school open.

This is likely to worsen over the coming week, so there is a strong possibility that we may have to consider partial closure (i.e. closing the school for some classes) or whole school closure at some point. Please be assured that we are taking things one day at a time and doing everything we can to manage the impact of this unprecedented situation.

Other issues

Please also be aware that from next week we will be taking further measures to manage the risk of exposing the children and staff to the virus. These include:

- Reinforcing the expectations around hand-washing for children and all visitors to the school on arrival
- Reducing the number of assemblies and events where larger groups of children gather.
- Cancelling or postponing events which involve a number of visitors coming to the school. For example – shared reading, parent workshops, and some assemblies.
- Reviewing all off-site visits and potentially cancelling those that present a significant risk e.g. the Y5 Brilliant Club trip to London is now cancelled.
- Reviewing the impact of staff absence each day on other school activities e.g. the Mothers' Day Present Room has had to be cancelled as we do not have staff or parents to run it.

Thank you again for your ongoing support at this difficult time.

Robert Staples
Headteacher