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Wednesday 18th March 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Coronavirus Update

After the very welcome decision by the government to extend the isolation period to fourteen days and extending to the whole family, I thought it worth sending out a letter to explain how things are likely to work in the next few weeks.

Like all schools, our intention is to keep the school open until we are told to do otherwise, so please continue to send your children in as normal unless you hear otherwise from us. If we have to close the whole school, it will only be under the direction of the government or direct guidance from Public Health England.

Due to the new guidance on self-isolation for fourteen days, I do have to make contingency plans and risk assessments for what to do in the event of multiple members of staff being absent for an extended period of time. I currently have plenty of ways to replace staff who are absent, but have to assume that over time my options may become limited until there are so few staff in school that I have to partially close the school to some classes.

If the situation becomes such that I am unable to provide a safe environment for the children, I will have to close the school to **some classes**. I understand that these are extraordinary measures, but we are in extraordinary times. Individual class closures will be announced on the web site and through the messaging system, so please ensure you check these before sending or bringing children to school.

Until some of these decisions may be forced upon us, we will continue to do everything possible to reduce possible infections in school through the continued use of hand sanitiser and the reduction of occasions in which the children come into contact with other classes. After this week there will be no further clubs, attendance at sporting events or whole school assemblies until further notice.

During the time we are open, the teachers will continue to plan and teach the classes as normal, with the work given to the children based on the teaching they have just received. Making all this work available to children who are self-isolating is not possible if the children have missed out on the teaching that goes along with it. Wherever possible, teachers will update the school blog with suggested work for the children that draws upon previous teaching, but this will not be able to replicate the education they would get if they were in school.

As the other change at governmental level is the daily briefing, I appreciate that the situation can change very rapidly so I would urge you to keep up to date with the news and the guidance available on the government web site. We will try to keep you all informed through the web site and messaging system, but if you see a county wide announcement, you can assume what you see in the press briefing is what will be happening. We are unlikely to receive advanced warning of any changes so usually find out about changes at the same time as everyone else.

As I mentioned in the 'Lockdown Activities' letter I sent out last week, in every situation we can find the positives if we look for them. Despite all the problems and worries this developing situation will bring to families, I am hopeful that the children will see the community and country come together to look after those in our society who need it the most. I've already seen heart-warming examples of neighbours helping neighbours, and people helping complete strangers. This is what I would like the children to remember from these times, with fights over toilet rolls becoming nothing more than an amusing footnote in history.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Thompson
Headteacher