



Ancaster  
Church of England Primary School

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

In light of the announcement made by the Prime Minister yesterday regarding the Government officially moving into the 'Delay' stage of their strategy to manage the outbreak of the recent Coronavirus, we wanted to communicate with our stakeholders to assure you on what is happening within our own school setting and what measures we are putting into place in response to national guidance.

The message from the UK Government is that schools should remain open and that whilst the closure of all schools is something that could happen in the future, their decision is not to deploy that particular delay tactic at this time. For this reason, our school remains open as usual. We do not underestimate the impact that this virus is having on society at the present time and we also note from several conversations with the parent body that there is a feeling of anxiety surrounding children coming to school. However, the guidance is clear from central government; should anyone exhibit a fever over 37.8C and/or a persistent cough then they should stay at home for 7 days. This guidance is for adults and children. Should further symptoms present or health deteriorates in any way, people are being encouraged to contact 111 or make contact via online services/telephone with their local GP.

As the spread of the virus increases, or a larger number of people self-isolate due to exhibiting mild symptoms as per guidance, we may be in a position where staffing, and therefore safety, is affected and if deemed necessary we may have to move to partial closures, part-time arrangements or a full closure. Every arrangement would be made in the first instance to keep the school open and we would communicate any changes at our earliest convenience (ParentHub/Website/Twitter). **Please note- parents should expect the school to be open and functioning as normal unless you are told otherwise.**

With the new measures in place, we envisage that children and staff may need to take this time away as per the recent instructions. If symptoms occur and this action is taken, please telephone the school to let us know. We will code this absence as an Exceptional Circumstance. Where there are children in school with any underlying health conditions or compromised immunity, we will be working with parents to plan and discuss possible next steps even in the event of no symptoms being present. For children without underlying health/medical conditions, should a child not have any symptoms and a parent decides to self-isolate anyway, at this time, we are unable to authorise this absence as the current guidance is that children who are well should be in school. Should we feel that a child is exhibiting symptoms (persistent cough and/or high temperature), we have a school thermometer and we will check their temperature and make contact with parents/carers.

With respect to the setting of work for children who self-isolate due to showing the above symptoms, we have decided that this will not take place as we will deem the child to be unwell. We will only set work externally to be completed in exceptional circumstances that prevent a child from being able to attend school for a prolonged period of time or if the UK Government decide to adopt a full closure of all school settings.

Ancaster Church of England Primary School  
Mercia Drive Grantham NG32 3QQ

Tel: 01400 230871 Email: [enquiries@ancaster.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@ancaster.lincs.sch.uk) Web: [www.ancasterprimary.org.uk](http://www.ancasterprimary.org.uk)  
Head Teacher: Mr Sam Eden



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We continue to be guided by the advice from the Department for Education, Public Health England and other relevant services. We continue to adapt our cleaning regime of the school to ensure that all contact points are being cleaned at multiple points throughout the day. Children have a strict handwashing rota, which is supervised by school adults and all visitors to the school will be asked to wash their hands on entry and when leaving. We have ensured our own strategic planning has catered for all eventualities to ensure our school can remain open and what action we will take in the event of any partial/full closures, should they occur.

What we are currently experiencing feels scary, uncomfortable and in many ways unprecedented but it is important that we remain calm and focus on the facts related to this virus but never losing sight of the fact that much is unknown due to how new the virus is. Please be assured that we are acting in the very best interest of every stakeholder within our school and we will do everything we can to ensure the health and safety of all.

Thank you for taking the time to read this communication. We will endeavour to keep you as updated and informed as possible through all of our usual channels of communication. Should you have any questions or queries related to this information, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Sally McDowall  
Chair of Governors

Mrs Sam Eden  
Headteacher