

ST MARK'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Headteacher: Ms Laura Kelsey BA (Hons), PGCE, CEPQH

Dear Parents/Carers,

16th March 2020

With the rapidly changing advice regarding Coronavirus, I thought it was worth writing to prepare you for any changes the school may have to consider in the coming days and weeks. Please ensure that you read to the end of this lengthy communication.

The Government advice last week was largely expected and included a greater emphasis on self-isolation. We have been directed to send home any child or adult with a fever or persistent cough. If this should happen, the advice is that self-isolation should then follow for a period of a full week. This will obviously affect children, parents and staff and therefore could impact on the day-to-day running of the school. If or when we find ourselves in this situation, the following actions may be taken:

- Putting classes together with shared staff
- Dividing classes between teachers

Other measures we will be putting in to place as from today include asking all adults to stay out of the school building as much as possible. I am requesting that all parents encourage their children to come into school on their own and for parents to drop off at the door. We will, of course be on hand to reassure them. After drop off, please leave the school site promptly. We are seeking to avoid the school community coming together in large numbers and at peak times.

Please use the school office email or phone number to communicate with us, rather than coming into school unless you absolutely need to. Should you not get a quick response, please understand that it will be because we are busy supporting children and/or staff. Please also remember you can drop documents off in the school post box by the gate, which is emptied every day. I know this all sounds very anti-social but these are hopefully short-term measures that will enable us all to stay fit for work and school, for as long as possible.

With regards to events planned for the rest of this term, we are cancelling celebration assemblies, trips and other events. This includes: Tuesday morning Church Services, NEARs enrichment activities, Year 6 SATs meeting, Fern and Bluebell celebration assemblies, KS2 Bake Off, Spring Disco, FOSM meetings, Easter church service and Christs Hospital Maths challenge. We will be monitoring the situation for events planned after the Easter holidays and keep you updated if these look like they will be cancelled.

We are planning to still run wrap-around care and after school clubs although we may need to cancel these at short notice if there is staff illness.

At this point, I think it is important to add context and reality. Despite the Education Minister's announcement that schools will remain open for the time being, we are doing what we must, including preparing for a national closure. I have shared our current and ever changing action plan with the staff team. This includes planning for how and when we will communicate with parents and vice versa, health and safety elements and what action would be taken should staff fall ill. We are currently compiling work that will be shared with all children via our school website or on Parentmail. This will be a mix of powerpoints, website links, spellings, phonics games and some suggested non screen activities that the children can try. At the time of any closure, we will send the children home with any resources that may be relevant to their age or stage. The majority of the staff team have young families or dependants so we will do our very best to balance supporting our school community as well as our own families.

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With this in mind, it is important that you make us aware if your child will not have access to a computer to view this work and please make sure we have your correct email address and ensure you are checking your ParentMail regularly. During this period we will endeavour to use ParentMail for only essential communication, so when you get an alert, please read the messages carefully.

Please send any amendments to your contact details to: office@st-marks.w-sussex.sch.uk

Finally, please can I ask you to speak to us directly if you are worried or concerned or have any further questions. Be assured that if there is something we all need to know - or if there is something that potentially increases the risk for you or your child - we will share that information ASAP and act upon it.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the staff team during this time, it is hugely appreciated. Whatever challenges we may face in the next week or so, I feel confident that we will meet these together.

Please find attached a leaflet we are sharing with the children in school about the Coronavirus in case you want to speak to them about it at home too.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Kelsey
Headteacher



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