

Dear Parents,

Once again, thank you for all your communication with school and for your kind words at the door this morning. I am writing this, hoping that by the time I get home tonight, Prime Minister Johnson has not been on the television.

I appreciate the news which broke last night has only caused further concern among the nation and caused greater unrest. In light of the prime ministerial directive last night - 14 days 'family' isolation - I have consulted Head Teacher's both within and outside of our locality, the teaching staff, Public Health England, the Archdiocese and our risk assessment. I have since considered and acted upon our approach and put in place further measures to keep school clean and to keep our children safe.

Today, we have:

- Cancelled the Wider Opportunity Music Provision for Y5 – This was a mutual decision between the Music Service and ourselves. *Many other schools have done this or are in the process of taking this step.*
- We have contacted the Pelican Centre and postponed swimming lessons for the foreseeable future – Swim England's guidance is that things proceed as normal, however, if we are cancelling and reducing visitors to school, it does not make sense to send our pupils and staff out to a community venture. *Many other schools are considering this option.*
- Thank you for the communication regarding some intermittent issues with Parent Mail – with this in mind, we have set-up a Facebook page for each class, which we may use in case of school closures as an alternative means of communicating information which is pertinent to each class. With enforced closures, we are mindful that apps such as Parent Mail may experience issues due to high volume usage. This was part of our long-term plan but one we have completed earlier than expected.
- Staff have been working together to look at what provision we can provide for children who are self-isolating for 14 days or in case of an enforced, prolonged closure. *At some point in the next day or so, please check your child can log onto Purple Mash at home. Any issues please let the office know and we can look to rectify this as soon as possible.*
- Continued with our additional cleaning routine in school.

Next Steps:

- Contact the Music Service in regards to music tuition.
- Re-evaluate and make any necessary amendments to our action plan in light of potential staff shortages (14 days family isolation).
- Local schools to continue to share information and the challenges pertinent to our schools.
- Continue to seek advice from Public Health England, the Local Authority and the Archdiocese.

BBC news earlier released a report on schools and the situation in general terms. This may answer some of your questions, especially if you have older children who are scheduled to undertake GCSE or A-Level examinations. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-51643556>.

The latest advice is a summary of last night's news:

Yesterday, the Government introduced new guidance on whole household isolation in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak:

- if you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home for 7 days from when your symptoms started
- if you live with others and you or another member of the household have symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill. It is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community

- for anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14-day isolation period.

The symptoms are:

- A high temperature (37.8 degrees and above)
- A new, continuous cough

All other advice regarding the importance of handwashing and the importance of staying open remain the same.

Thank you to those parents who have contacted school requesting work for their children. Yesterday's advice is still in place. We recommend the following: **Reading (Home reader or another book), TT Rockstars, Top Marks website (daily 10), and the BBC website (Or Youtube) for videos related to current topics of study. If you have one child off sick, you can access 20 free maths questions per day on ixl.com.** *I know some of you are completing writing topics – Literacy Shed have fantastic videos on there which you can use for discussions, ideas for writing etc... One of my favourites is 'The catch'. This can be found under their 'Other cultures' tab. Many of these videos can also be found on Youtube.*

As previously stated, we are putting together work which children can complete at home. For those currently self-isolating, we should have packs ready for collection on Thursday after school. We will communicate this with you tomorrow. Thank you for your patience with this. Moving forward, as previously stated, please check your Purple Mash access at home – Thank you.

The children have once again been a delight, completing their work and playing with smiles on their faces. I have witnessed this morning, for the very first time during my 21 years in education, a 'hand-wash' conga – well done Year 5 for finding innovative ways of cleaning your hands.

Tomorrow, unless the situation changes, we will be open. Thank you once again for all your support during this unprecedented times.

Take care

Kind Regards

Mr M^cDermott