

The Valley Primary School

School Drive, Oakamoor, Staffordshire. ST10 3DQ. Tel: 01538 702355. e-mail: office@valley.staffs.sch.uk



Tuesday 10th March, 2020

Dear parents/carers,

As you will know from the media, the cases of Coronavirus (Covid 19) are currently increasing in the west midlands and globally. As a school, we are continuing to talk to children about the importance of washing their hands thoroughly, maintaining good hygiene and acting in a sensible manner to reduce the spreading of any germs. We also have an effective cleaning team in school and display lots of posters reminding children to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' when it comes to using tissues when sneezing, or for a 'runny nose'.

Our school and Trust receive updates (some of which are currently daily) from Staffordshire Local Authority; our Health and Safety partners; Public Health England; and the Department for Education, to keep us up-to-date with any processes which we need to have in place to reduce risk. Any decision which we take as a school and Trust will be solely based upon the safety of our children, family members, staff and Trustees and we thank you in advance for your full support with these decisions and the reasons behind them.

Currently, we are advised that the most effective way of avoiding spreading, or contracting, the coronavirus is to maintain good hygiene and to regularly wash hands thoroughly with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds (a rough equivalent of singing the 'happy birthday to you' song twice – this may, of course, be sung in your head rather than out loud!). This should also take place before and after eating, and upon arriving in school (or work), and when returning home. People are also advised to either sneeze into a tissue, then throw this away and wash hands; or if no tissue is available, to sneeze (and cough) into your own elbow.

Should you feel unwell with symptoms of the virus, in the first instance, please call the **NHS telephone line: 111**.

The advice also recommends that we try to avoid visiting people who may be unwell. If you feel as though you, or your child, may have been in contact with someone exposed to the virus, please follow the advice given on the telephone line (111), or a medical professional, and share any relevant information with school so we can keep everyone safe. Please also contact 111 for immediate advice if you have recently returned home from a trip to one of the areas mostly affected by the virus (details of these can be found on the link at the end of the letter) – even if you have no symptoms. Again, please also keep school informed.

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We are advised that although antibacterial hand-sanitisers may help to keep us clean, the most effective way to keep hands clean is to simply wash them thoroughly in warm soapy water. If you are sending hand-sanitisers into school, these must not be alcohol-based, and **must be labelled with your child's name** and passed to their class-teacher. These should not be kept in your child's bag, as (similarly with any medication) we do not want any other child to swallow these, or use them without a full appreciation of the ingredients and potential reactions. Indeed, please note that also due to potential reactions, children will not be allowed to use hand-sanitisers brought into school by another child. If your child has an allergy to hand-sanitisers, please notify the school immediately. If you choose to send a small hand-sanitiser gel into school with your child, please ensure that the ingredients are all suitable for your child, and that you have shown them how to use this at home so they are confident when applying sensibly.

Although some of the reports in the media may sound scary, we all have a responsibility to act sensibly, set good examples, and play our part in ensuring that we, and others around us, stay safe. That way, we can make a real difference in reducing the number of cases and the spread of the virus.

For further (regularly updated) information on the virus, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

or

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For any other advice regarding Coronavirus (covid-19) please contact 111.

Kind regards,

The Valley Primary School team