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Headteacher : Rhonda Blakemore
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17.3.2020

Dear Parent/Carer ,

I am sure you are all keeping up to date with the guidance measures being set by central Government in relation to Coronavirus. We are currently experiencing a challenging time as a country and for our local community and we must take the necessary steps to ensure we look after the health and well-being of all members of our Academy community and their families and friends.

In his address at 5.00pm on Monday 16th March Prime Minister Boris Johnson stated:

*“Last week we asked everyone to stay at home if you had one of two key symptoms: **a high temperature or a new and continuous cough.***

Today, we need to go further, because according to SAGE [the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies] it looks as though we’re now approaching the fast growth part of the upward curve. And without drastic action, cases could double every 5 or 6 days. So, first, we need to ask you to ensure that if you or anyone in your household has one of those two symptoms, then you should stay at home for fourteen days.”

The guidance from the Government for Educational Settings that was updated on 16th March 2020 was that schools should continue to remain open whilst adopting the following guidelines:

- Staff, young people and children should stay at home if they are unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature* to avoid spreading infection to others - otherwise they should attend education or work as normal
- If staff, young people or children become unwell on site with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature they should be sent home
- Unless you have been directly advised to close by the local Public Health England Health Protection Team, we recommend all education settings remain open

* A high temperature is 37.8 degrees and above

In addition to this advice we do need to include and insist that **‘if one person in any household has a persistent cough or fever, everyone living there must stay at home for 14 days’**. Students or staff who were in self-isolation before the updated measures relating to household self-isolation for 14 Days will be now asked to put this in place. For example, if a student went into self-isolation on Monday 16th March prior to the updated guidance any siblings were permitted to be in school.

As an Academy we now advise that any students who had any family member in self- isolation prior to 16th March now also go into self-isolation for 14 Days in line with the new guidance.

The Government has also increased its recommendation for people who are in the most vulnerable groups as listed below.



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Government advice is:

We are advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.

This group includes those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (i.e anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
 - chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as **asthma**, **chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)**, emphysema or **bronchitis**
 - chronic heart disease, such as **heart failure**
 - **chronic kidney disease**
 - chronic liver disease, such as **hepatitis**
 - chronic neurological conditions, such as **Parkinson's disease**, **motor neurone disease**, **multiple sclerosis (MS)**
 - a learning disability or cerebral palsy
 - **diabetes**
 - problems with your spleen – for example, **sickle cell** disease or if you have had your spleen removed
 - a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as **HIV and AIDS**, or medicines such as **steroid tablets** or **chemotherapy**
 - being seriously overweight (a BMI of 40 or above)
 - those who are pregnant

The advice from the Government from Monday 16th March 2020 is that any person who is in the vulnerable person groups(s) should implement Social Distancing. This is defined as:

What is social distancing?

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce the social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible; **Work from home, where possible**
3. Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs
4. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media



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5. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services.

Everyone should be trying to follow these measures as much as is pragmatic.

For those who are over 70, have an underlying health condition or are pregnant, we strongly advise you to follow the above measures as much as you can, and to significantly limit your face- to-face interaction with friends and family if possible. This advice is likely to be in place for some weeks.

If any student or member of staff falls into any of the Government guidance increased risk categories we advise that from Tuesday 17th March Social Distancing measures are put in place. For students and staff this will mean studying or working from home.

Whilst the Academy remains open please use the process below to make us aware of student absence.

Student Absence - Please continue to make us aware if your child is not going to be in school for any reason as you would normally do. When communicating the reason for absence I ask that you clarify whether it is for self-isolation.

Any absence due to Coronavirus measures is being recorded as 'exceptional circumstances'.

What else will we continue to do?

As per the current advice, the most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves remains washing their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Make sure you cough or sneeze into a tissue, put it in a bin and wash your hands. Please continue to follow these guidelines both in school and at home.

If there is further advice given you will be kept fully informed. Thank you again for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Rhonda Blakemore

Headteacher