

Dear Parent Carer,

You will be aware of the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and the subsequent confirmed cases in the UK. **There's currently no cause for concern at any of the schools within the Seaton Valley Federation.** We take the health and safety of our pupils and staff very seriously, so we are sharing [guidance](#) from Public Health England on steps you should be taking.

The advice regarding COVID-19 is rapidly changing. We continue to follow Public Health England (PHE) advice closely and receive daily updates from the Department for Education.

As things currently stand the federation is operating as normal. Most people need to make no change to their normal daily lives and it is important to ensure that there is no panic or overreaction. However there are measures we are taking in school to help prevent the spread of the virus.

#### **Initial precautionary measures in school:**

- Assemblies / information briefings to be delivered for all students on the importance of regular and correct hand washing and a reminder of 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach to coughs and sneezes
- Students are encouraged to wash their hands regularly during the day
- Official posters about correct hand washing are in place around school
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are in place for use by all visitors on arrival and departure from school and are situated in locations around school for students and staff
- Staff have been briefed about precautionary measures they should take in monitoring and encouraging student hygiene.

#### **Information gathering and monitoring:**

- We are monitoring and responding to government advice on a daily basis
- We understand the action to take if a student or staff member returns from a Category 1 area, but are reliant on honest and open information sharing with regard to this
- We are using the dedicated helpline for schools if we need specific advice, for example, on future school trips and visits
- We are monitoring student and staff absence and their return from absence and understand the action to take in case of a suspected/actual case.

#### **The extract below is from current guidance:**

*Suspected case: If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case in a school, no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for COVID-19 are awaited. There is no need to close the setting or send other learners or staff home.*

*Confirmed case: The school will be contacted by Public Health England to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. An assessment of each school will be*

*undertaken by PHE with relevant staff. Advice on the management of students and staff will be based on this assessment. If there is a confirmed case, a risk assessment will be undertaken with advice from the local Health Protection Team. In most cases closure of the school will be unnecessary but this will be a local decision based on various factors.*

### **Preparation in case of future disruption to school:**

- We are planning our response in the event of any future government instruction to instigate a partial or whole school(s) closure
- In such a scenario, we will follow all government advice and consult with other schools, the local authority, exam boards and any other relevant bodies
- Any updates regarding school closures will appear on the Seaton Valley Federation [website](#). We will also send messages to all parents registered on School Gateway to alert them that the website has been updated.
  - If you have not already registered with School Gateway we strongly advise that you do this now. Instructions on how to do this can be found [here](#).
- We will prioritise the continued education for those sitting public exams this summer (Y6, Y11, Y12 and Y13). Current advice is that all students should continue their preparations for exams on the assumption of these will still take place in accordance with the current published examination timetable.
  - **Please be aware of the GCSE & A Level exam contingency day - Wednesday 24 June 2020.** The Joint Council for Qualifications has set this date which will be used if it has been necessary to postpone an exam(s) for any reason. All GCSE and A Level students must be available for this date should it be needed.
- We are assessing all planned trips and visits and will make decisions based on risk level and current Government advice as to whether they can go ahead.

### **I would be grateful if you could bear the following points in mind at this time:**

- Continue to encourage your children to wash their hands carefully and regularly for 20 seconds with soapy water and to use sanitizer
- Remind your child that if they need to sneeze or cough to do so into disposable tissues and to dispose of these in a bin
- Remind your children to avoid touching their mouth, nose or face as much as possible
- If your child or a member of your child's family has returned from a category one area (and they have had contact with them) do not send your child to school - follow medical guidance from PHE and contact the school by phone to inform us of this
- If your child falls ill and you believe they have been exposed to the coronavirus (COVID-19) either through travel to a category one area or through contact with a confirmed case, government advice currently is to call NHS 111 or 999 in a life-threatening situation.

### **Helpline for parents**

The helpline available to schools is also available to parents as follows:

Phone 0800 046 8687

Email [DFE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DFE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Opening hours 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday

You can also call the NHS direct on 111 if you have any concerns or need any more specific information.

I will keep you updated on any developments and thank you for your continued support, cooperation and understanding.

Yours sincerely

John Barnes

Executive Headteacher.