



Bellenden Primary School

Executive Headteacher: Mr Gregory Doey

Heateacher: Mrs Julie Ireland

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3rd March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

We appreciate that there is a great deal of anxiety around the potential spread of Coronavirus in the UK.

We wanted to take this opportunity to reassure parents that we are taking all necessary precautions, and closely monitoring the situation.

All staff have been briefed on arrangements in place, both within the school and precautions to be taken when travelling. Staff returning from any area will follow the necessary government guidance. All our staff have been briefed in their duty of care to our colleagues and children, and take the risk of spread incredibly seriously.

There is no reason why your children cannot continue to attend school as normal and in fact **schools are not allowed to close unless told by Public Health England**. We urge you all to support us by adhering to the government guidance on containing the virus, of which some key links have been provided below.

What we are doing:

- all staff have been briefed and are fully aware of government guidelines and their duty of care to all our children;
- During whole school assembly on Monday 2nd March, we shared with children the expectations for personal hygiene and the importance of washing hands at key points throughout the day and after coughing/sneezing;
- we have increased our supply of tissues to ensure they are readily available for both children and staff throughout the school as well as ensuring the supply of hand sanitiser;
- all staff returning from any affected area will be informed of their duty to self-isolate;
- daily review of the government guidance will be undertaken by the school and acted upon.

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How you can help

The greatest support that you can offer is by being vigilant and that you are familiar with the latest government guidance on travel restrictions by following the below link.

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

The Government guidance for education setting contains some practical guidance on preventing spread, which we would like to share with all parents / guardians.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Notifying school of travel to affected areas

If you have been to any of the below areas over half term please take the following advice and inform the school.

1) If you have returned from the following areas **since February 19**, call NHS111 to inform them of your recent travel, stay indoors and avoid contact with other people **even if you do not have symptoms:**

- Iran
- Specific lockdown areas in Northern Italy* as designated by the Government of Italy
- Daegu or Cheongdo, Republic of Korea)
- Hubei province, China (returned in the past 14 days)

* *Bertonico • Casalpusterlengo • Castelgerundo • Castiglione D'Adda • Codogno • Fombio • Maleo • San Fiorano • Somaglia • Terranova dei Passerini:*

2) If you have returned from the following areas since **February 19th** and develop symptoms, however mild, you should stay indoors at home and avoid contact with other people immediately and call NHS111. **You do not need to follow this advice if you have no symptoms.**

- Northern Italy
- Vietnam
- Cambodia
- Laos
- Myanmar

3) If you have returned to the UK from any of the following areas **in the last 14 days** and develop symptoms of cough or fever or shortness of breath, you should immediately stay indoors and avoid contact with other people, call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the country.

- Other parts of China outside Hubei province
- Thailand
- Japan
- Republic of Korea
- Hong Kong
- Taiwan
- Singapore
- Malaysia

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- Macau

Preventing spread of infection

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available (this is particularly important after taking public transport);
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze or cough into the crux of your elbow and not your hand. Refer to [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#).
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting.
- pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
 - before leaving home;
 - on arrival at school;
 - after using the toilet;
 - after breaks and sporting activities;
 - before food preparation.;
 - before eating any food, including snacks;
 - before leaving school.

Additionally,

- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available;
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell;
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces;
- if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111.

If anyone can donate boxes of tissues, we would very much appreciate it.

We appreciate your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Gregory Doey
Executive Headteacher