

Monday 16th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I'm sure you will appreciate, we are currently dealing with a complex and rapidly changing situation. I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that I am receiving daily updates from the Department for Education (DfE), Public Health and the Local Authority and acting upon any advice given.

My first priority will always be the health and safety of the pupils and staff in our school. Now, more than ever, this remains our primary focus.

In school, we have already taken the following measures:

- Teachers have spoken to all of the children about the importance of handwashing. Children are being directed to thoroughly wash their hands on a regular basis, whilst in school, along with other good hygiene routines such as not touching their face and using tissues, which can then be thrown away. Hand sanitizer is also available in every classroom.
- We have been in regular contact with the Department for Education regarding individual circumstances as they arise and we will continue to follow the department's guidance.
- Our cleaners have been following the latest guidance ensuring all touch points are cleaned regularly.
- We have been checking where families have been returning from if they have travelled overseas.
- We have begun making plans for learning and vulnerable families should a closure be put in place.

This is an entirely unprecedented situation and we are following official advice from the government via the Department for Education and Public Health England. This advice is evolving on a daily basis and we are monitoring and responding to it as it is published. This official advice will underpin all the actions we take.

Whilst I appreciate that there will be a wide range of different views about how we should be responding and what action should be taken, I hope you will appreciate that I am duty bound to follow the official advice from government.

In addition to the actions we have already taken, we have now decided to increase our response in order to reduce the number of people visiting our school and therefore reducing the risk of transmission. From Monday 16th March 2020 all non-essential visitors will not be permitted to enter our building. This means the following events will not take place in school until further notice:

- There will be no Showcase Assemblies until further notice.
- There will be no INSPIRE or LAMP sessions for parents until further notice.

- Parents Evening will be cancelled on Wednesday 18th March and Thursday 19th March 2020.
- All swimming lessons and school visits, including BC Tigers, will be cancelled until further notice.
- All after school/extra-curricular clubs, including Year 6 Boosters, will be cancelled until further notice. (Harvills' Fun Academy, Wrap Around Care, will remain open).

Whilst this may be upsetting for children and families, we are taking these measures to protect our school community as much as we can. I hope that parents and carers support and understand why we are having to do this given the circumstance is unprecedented and serious.

We understand that the coming weeks will be challenging for everyone in our community. We would ask families to follow the advice of the Government which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

If you are worried about a member of your family follow the guidance below from the NHS:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Stay at home if you have coronavirus symptoms

Stay at home for 7 days if you have either:

- a high temperature of 37.8 or above – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.

Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home.

Urgent advice: Use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service if:

- you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home
- your condition gets worse
- your symptoms do not get better after 7 days

Use the 111 coronavirus service

Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.

Statutory Assessments

Harvills Hawthorn Primary School
 Wolseley Road, West Bromwich B70 0NG
 Tel: 0121 557 1034 | Fax: 0121 520 5760



I'm aware of the impact this situation is likely to have on tests and exams. Whilst my immediate concern is the health and safety of pupils and their families, clearly the longer-term impact is a concern too. I have been in communication with NAHT and I'm confident that these matters are being raised with government. I will keep you updated with any further information as and when we receive it.

What Parents and Carers need to do now?

- If any of our pupils need to self-isolate or are a confirmed case, please can you ensure that you notify school straight away so that we can follow the guidance we have been given for when such situations arise.
- Ensure that your contact details are up to date on School Gateway as this is the main form of communication with yourselves should we need to contact you if the situation changes.
- The Department for Education have a Coronavirus helpline which is also open to parents if you have any concerns. The phone number is 0800 046 8687. Opening hours are 8am - 6pm, Monday - Friday.
- If you have non-urgent issues, please telephone school 0121 5571034 rather than coming in to the school building. Please do not gather in the school's reception area.
- If you require any family support, you may ring Michelle (Family Worker) between 9am-2.30pm on 07716771632.

The situation regarding Coronavirus is ever changing but, in the meantime, we will continue to work to provide your children with the best education possible whilst keeping their safety and well-being our priority. The coming weeks will, no doubt, be a challenge for us. May I take this opportunity to thank you all, in advance, for your support during this difficult time.

Yours Faithfully



Miss J. Sheen
Headteacher

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