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Friday 13 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you today about the COVID-19 virus, or Corona virus, because the advice from the government has changed. Many of you have been asking about what you should do so I have copied advice from the DFE website and attached to this letter, which is now advising all people who develop a high temperature or a new, continuous cough to self-isolate for 7 days. This means not only staying at home, but also following certain steps in order to minimise the spread of the virus.

This is a situation that is very new to us and we are constantly looking at the latest updates on the DFE website so that we can ensure our advice to you and care of the children whilst in school is the best that we can offer.

If you do have the symptoms described in the advice and keep your child away from school, their absence will be authorised and we will expect that they will be away from school for 7 consecutive days, in line with government advice. Advice at the moment is that anybody with no symptoms does not pose a risk of infection so it is safe for them to attend school.

Whilst I appreciate that this is a situation that is extremely challenging, your co-operation is much appreciated so that our practice is in line with government advice. Schools will remain open until instructed to close by the government.

If you have any queries about this, please contact your Head Teacher or Principal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'HRowland'.

Helen Rowland

Chief Executive Officer

Focus-Trust

ADVICE FROM the DFE:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-government-announces-moving-out-of-contain-phase-and-into-delay>

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.

We are asking anyone who shows certain symptoms to self-isolate for 7 days, regardless of whether they have travelled to affected areas. This means we want people to stay at home and avoid all but essential contact with others for 7 days from the point of displaying mild symptoms, to slow the spread of infection.

The symptoms are: * A high temperature (37.8 degrees and above) * A new, continuous cough

You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection

Key Messages

- if you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started.
- this action will help protect others in your community whilst you are infectious.
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home.
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home.
- stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home whenever possible.
- sleep alone, if that is possible.
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water.
- stay away from vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as much as possible.
- you do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact [NHS 111 online](https://111.nhs.uk). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.