



Malton School

A Specialist Science School

SUPPORT INSPIRE THRIVE

13th March 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

Coronavirus Update

I am writing with a further update on our response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic following the announcement of the Prime Minister last night.

The current position of the British government is that all schools should remain open. We will continue to do so until told otherwise by the government.

The government did however decide that all school trips abroad should be cancelled for the foreseeable future. We have responded to this today by cancelling our Year 10 trip to the First World War battlefields and our Year 7 trip to Normandy. We have not yet cancelled the sixth form visit to Ecuador in the summer holidays but we will continue to monitor the situation and we will keep parents and students informed. School trips and visits within the UK are not yet covered by this ban, although the school will have to consider each trip and visit on its merits and according to the most up-to-date risk assessment for that visit. This applies to school sporting fixtures and events.

There is no requirement yet on schools to cancel events such as school productions or parents' evenings. Again each of these need to be risk assessed on their own merits. We will be continuing to review our calendar of events each week and we will keep you informed of any further cancellations or postponements.

At the end of this letter I have included a summary of government advice that has been issued today from various departments. I hope it is useful for you to have a summary like this in one place of easy reference but do bear in mind that it is a summary and if you have a specific question or issue you do need to look up the full detail on the government website www.gov.uk

A few key points from this summary of government advice that are particularly relevant for school are included here:

- The government has now moved from its "contain" phase to a "delay" phase.
- This means that if your child has the following symptoms they should self-isolate for 7 days:
 - A new continuous cough
 - A high temperature

In these circumstances, please contact school on the normal absence line and leave a message explaining the situation. Your child will be able to access school work on-line using their iPad and our Showbie app when they are well enough to do so.



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If you and your family are still planning to travel abroad during the Easter or May half-term breaks, I would urge you to consult the latest travel advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Public Health England. The government are now asking that you notify school of any foreign travel to assist with the risk management processes of the school. The FCO has today advised against all but essential travel to parts of Spain, including Madrid, La Rioja and the municipalities of La Bastida, Vitoria and Miranda de Ebro. The FCO does not currently advise against travel to other areas in Spain, but is keeping their travel advice under constant review. British nationals with upcoming journeys planned, should check with their airlines and tour operators.

The school installed additional hand sanitisers round the buildings 3 weeks ago and we have encouraged students, staff and visitors to be vigilant with their hand-washing and hygiene practices. The students have been a real credit to you in terms of the very sensible and level-headed way they have responded to the situation. We continue to try to strike the right balance between keeping it all in proportion and avoiding panic on the one hand, and, on the other, doing all we can to ensure the health and wellbeing of everyone at the school. It is a trying time for us all and I greatly appreciate your understanding and support for our efforts to tackle this as sensibly as we can.

Finally, the school has been developing plans as to how we will continue to provide education in the event of a forced school closure. We have the distinct advantage of being a school where all the students and staff have an iPad and where we have invested in educational apps, like Showbie, which allow staff to deliver teaching content and materials to the students and for the students to complete work at home and submit it back to the staff team for feedback and assessment. These plans are being fine-tuned. It is my intention to write to you again by the end of next week with the details of how we will manage this situation should it arise.

Yours faithfully,



Rob Williams
Headteacher



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Summary of Government Advice about Coronavirus 13th March 2020

Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, it is unlikely that they have been infected.

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have been reported in children.

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

How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.

There are 2 routes by which people could become infected:

- secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face).

There is currently no good evidence that people who do not have symptoms are infectious to others.

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:



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- 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. See [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
- 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. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment
- see further information on the [Public Health England Blog](#) and the [NHS UK website](#).

PHE has a [suite of materials](#) that contains public health advice about how you can help stop the spread of viruses, like those that cause COVID-19, by practicing good respiratory and hand hygiene. To access, download and share this information you will need to register for an account which only takes a couple of minutes.

Face masks for the general public, pupils or students, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

People who have returned from [Category 1 specified countries/areas](#) in the last 14 days should self-isolate. This includes avoiding attending an educational setting or work until 14 days after they return.

People who have returned from [Category 2 specified countries/areas](#) in the last 14 days, are advised to stay at home if they develop symptoms. All other pupils or students and staff should continue to attend school or university, including their siblings attending the same or a different school (unless advised not to by public health officials).

Main messages

If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, do not leave your home for 7 days from when your symptoms started.

- this action will help protect others in your community while 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 get the things you need to stay at home
- stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home if possible
- sleep alone, if 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



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- 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](#). If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

Who this guidance is for

This advice is intended for people with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), including those with a diagnosis of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection, who must remain at home until they are well.

Will I be tested if I think I have COVID-19?

We will not be testing those self-isolating with mild symptoms. The following advice is designed to help people prevent the spread.

Why staying at home is very important

Staying at home while you have coronavirus (COVID-19) helps to protect your friends, colleagues and the wider community. It will also help to control the spread of the virus.

We realise that staying at home may be difficult or frustrating, but there are things that you can do to help make it easier. These include:

- plan ahead and think about what you will need in order to be able to stay at home for the full 7 days
- talk to your employer, friends and family to ask for their help to access the things you will need in order to successfully stay at home
- think about and plan how you can get access to food and other supplies such as medications that you will need during this period
- ask friends or family to drop off anything you need or order supplies online, but make sure these are left outside your home for you to collect
- make sure that you keep in touch with friends and family over the phone or through social media
- think about things you can do during your time at home. People who have successfully completed a period of staying at home have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films
- when you are feeling better, remember that physical exercise can be good for your wellbeing. Look for online classes or courses that can help you take light exercise in your home

While you are staying at home, make sure you do the following things:

Stay at home

You should remain in your home. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transport or taxis. You cannot go for a walk.

You will need to ask friends or relatives if you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication. Alternatively, you can order medication by phone or online. You can also order your shopping online. Make sure you tell delivery drivers to leave items outside for collection if you order online. The delivery driver should not come into your home.

At home, try as best you can to separate yourself from the people you live with



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You should aim to stay in a well-ventilated room with a window that can be opened. Try to keep the window open as much as possible to enable ventilation and air flow as this will help to keep clean air moving through your room.

Try to separate yourself from other people in your home and keep the door closed. If you cannot stay in a separate room aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from the other people in your house. We understand that this can be particularly difficult for parents of small children, people with other caring responsibilities or those living in studio apartments, for example.

Try to keep yourself separated from other people as much as possible, and make sure everyone regularly follows the steps in this guidance (washing your hands, not touching your face, cleaning surfaces etc.).

Use your own toothbrushes, eating and drinking utensils (including cups and glasses in the bathroom and bedroom), dishes, drinks, towels, washcloths or bed linen.

If you have your own garden it is fine to use it as long as you keep 2 metres away from other members of your household. If possible they should use the outside area separately.

Use of shared spaces if you live with others

Minimise the time you spend in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas as much as possible and keep shared spaces well ventilated.

Aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from people you live with and sleep in a different bed where possible. If you can, use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. Make sure you use separate towels from other people in your house, both for drying yourself after bathing or showering and for hand-hygiene purposes. Ask your family or the people you live with to remember to use their own towels.

If you do share toilet and bathroom, it is important that you clean them after you have used them every time (for example, wiping surfaces you have come into contact with). Another tip is to consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with you using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bath, sink and toilet yourself.

If you share a kitchen with others, avoid using it while others are present. Take your meals back to your room to eat. If you have one, use a dishwasher to clean and dry your used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them using your usual washing up liquid and warm water and dry them thoroughly, remembering to use a separate tea towel.

We understand that it will be difficult for some people to separate themselves from others at home. You should do your very best to follow this guidance and everyone in your household should regularly wash their hands, avoid touching their face and clean frequently touched surfaces.

If you live alone with children

Keep following this advice to the best of your ability, however we are aware that not all these measures will be possible.

What we have seen so far is that children with COVID-19 appear to be less severely affected. It is nevertheless important to do your best to follow this guidance.

If your child develops symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from the onset of their symptoms.



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If you live with an older, vulnerable or pregnant person

If you provide care to an elderly, vulnerable or pregnant person, keep following this advice to the best of your ability. However, we are aware that not all of these measures will be possible.

Cleaning and disposal of waste

When cleaning you should use your usual household products, like detergents and bleach as these will be very effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Clean frequently touched surfaces.

Personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within your own room. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in your usual external household waste bin.

Other household waste can be disposed of as normal.

Laundry

Do not shake dirty laundry; this minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air.

Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items.

If you do not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after your 7 day isolation period has ended when you can then take your laundry to a public laundromat.

What you can do to help yourself get better

Drink water to keep yourself hydrated; you should drink enough during the day so your urine (pee) is a pale clear colour. You can use over-the-counter medications, such as paracetamol, to help with some of your symptoms. Use these according to the instructions on the packet or label and do not exceed the recommended dose.

If you need to seek medical advice

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening. If it's not an emergency, contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the call handler or operator that you have coronavirus (COVID-19).

All routine medical and dental appointments should usually be cancelled while you are sick and staying at home. If you are concerned or have been asked to attend in person within the period you are home isolating, discuss this with your medical contact first (for example, your GP, local hospital or outpatient service), using the number they have provided. If your concerns are related to COVID-19 contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111.

Wash your hands often

Cleaning your hands frequently throughout the day by washing with soap and water for 20 seconds or using hand sanitiser will help protect you and the people you live with. This step is one of the most effective ways of reducing the risk of infection to you and to other people.



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Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze.

If you have a carer they should take care to use disposable tissues to wipe away any mucus or phlegm after you have sneezed or coughed.

Dispose of tissues into a disposable rubbish bag and immediately wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitiser.

Do not have visitors in your home

Do not invite or allow social visitors, such as friends and family, to enter your home. If you want to speak to someone who is not a member of your household, use the phone or social media.

Looking after your wellbeing while staying at home

We know that staying at home for a prolonged period of time can be difficult, frustrating and lonely for some people and that you may feel low. It's important to remember to take care of your mind as well as your body and to get support if and when you need it. Stay in touch with family and friends over the phone or on social media. There are also sources of support and information that can help.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

Think about things you can do during your time at home. People who have successfully completed a period of staying at home have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films. If you feel well enough you can take part in light exercise within your home or garden.

Ending self-isolation

You should remain at home until 7 days after the onset of your symptoms. After 7 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, you should contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111.

Cough may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days.



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