



Headteacher Mrs A Johnson

Thursday 19th March 2020

Dear parents/carers,

Re: Coronavirus

I am writing to update you about the school's current position regarding Coronavirus.

We take the health and safety and wellbeing of our pupils and staff very seriously, and, as such, we want to reassure you that we are following the guidance from Public Health England and the Department for Education (DfE).

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

Thank you all for your continued patience and understanding during these complex, challenging and rapidly changing circumstances. The government announcement at 5pm yesterday presents us with a number of short, medium- and longer-term issues, which we are working to address.

The local authority is aware that this is a unique and extreme situation we are working in, and the education, SEND, and social care teams will continue to work closely with schools to work through the different phases of response to yesterday's announcement.

In terms of the decision-making process around who should physically be in school, please make sure that you continue to refer back to the current guidance around self-isolation. Until it is updated, all of the core guidance from PHE remains the same.

At present, we are mapping out arrangements to Easter to ensure the education of all children, particularly educational provision for those children of key workers and those with Education Health Care Plans. We are awaiting clarification from the government on its definition of key workers, however, in essence these are people in health, social care, teachers, the emergency services and delivery drivers who have no alternative childcare arrangements.

We are in the process of requesting parents to self-identify and notify us if they are a key worker, and our SEND/pastoral team are liaising with parents directly to identify pupils who will be in school in the next two weeks.

In terms of the next phase, there is discussion around arrangements over the Easter holidays and beyond and we will notify you of the outcome of this as soon as possible.

Please see the latest Government guidance on Free School Meals published on 19th March 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>

Staff are currently making plans to support your child's education. Children in Classes 1, 2, 3 and 4 will bring home some reading books, an exercise book, pencil and pen and instructions on how to access online 'Reading Buddies'. If your child is not currently in school these can be collected from





school from Monday. We aim for remote learning tasks to be available in the 'Our classes' page on our school website from Monday, and will inform you when these are available.

Here you will find learning task 'menus' covering subject areas. Resources needed for each of the tasks will also be available.

www.peaseswest.durham.sch.uk/our-classes/

In addition to these, your child can:

- Access daily reading from their school reading book AND other reading sources of interest e.g. comics, newspapers/magazines, online news.
- Keep up with current world affairs such as watching or reading Newsround. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround>
- Complete activities from their home learning grid.
- Practise number bonds and times tables. The following free website is ideal: <https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button>

www.phonicsplay.co.uk is giving free access to all its games and supports phonics teaching.

Furthermore, to support you during this period, Twinkl is offering every parent and carer access to all Twinkl resources with a One Month Ultimate Membership, totally free of charge, so children can still have access to high-quality learning during any periods of disruption.

Setting this up is really easy to do - go to www.twinkl.co.uk/offer and enter the code **UKTWINKLHELPS**

It's easy to arrange access through the Twinkl website. If you do have any questions please get in touch with our TwinklCares team. As we are supporting people globally please bear in mind that we are receiving a large number of enquiries so please only get in touch if your enquiry is of an urgent nature at twinklcares@twinkl.co.uk

You can also visit the website - www.twinkl.co.uk

You can contact school should you have any questions, through our email peaseswest@durhamlearning.net and/or Facebook messenger.

We are very aware that some children, families and staff will find this situation very worrying. Please find below links to support pupils and staff around mental wellbeing:

<https://www.mind.org.hk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ResponseCoronavirusENG6.2.2020-.pdf>

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stress-print.pdf?sfvrsn=f3a063ff_2





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https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/11/well/family/coronavirus-teenagers-anxiety.html?fbclid=IwAR3ZiNhgumvsqDnY9Ewh0WmDpbbcO3Mfr4UJdcB_doNnxaNLK9b42KZFnhw

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/02/stop-a-worry-becoming-catastrophic-how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-the-coronavirus>

Anna Freud: Self-Care and Coping Strategies

<https://www.annafreud.org/selfcare/>

BBC: How to protect your mental health

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799>

CBBC: Video and Questions

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51861089>

ChildMind: Talking to Children

<https://childmind.org/article/talking-to-kids-about-the-coronavirus/>

ELSA: Coronavirus Story for Children

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/coronavirus-story-for-children/>

National Association of School Psychologists: Parent Resources

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-a-parent-resource](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-(coronavirus)-a-parent-resource)

Young Minds: Feeling Anxious about Coronavirus

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus>

It is fair to say that this is probably as challenging a situation as there can be for children, families and school staff. We need to work together and support each other and the people in our school communities.

Thank you once again for your continued support, patience and understanding.

I will continue to update you on a regular basis.

Many thanks,

Alison Johnson
Headteacher

