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17th March 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians

Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Contingency Plan

To continue to keep you up to date with the latest information concerning Coronavirus, we are writing to you with further specific advice and our plans for the coming weeks and months.

It is very difficult to predict what might happen but, we have taken steps in school to plan as best we can for future events and would appreciate your support and understanding.

Action we are already taking:

Raising awareness

In school this week, all children are being given reassurance about Coronavirus. This primarily follows NHS 111 and Government advice and focuses in particular on washing hands regularly.

Hand sanitisers

As you will be aware, there is a global shortage of hand sanitisers, so we are asking you to support us by providing a hand sanitiser for your child, where possible. However, the toilets all have a plentiful supply of soap and we are encouraging all children to wash their hands thoroughly at break and lunchtime as a minimum.

General cleaning

We continue to enhance our general cleaning and are disinfecting throughout the day.

Current Guidance

Any pupil with a persistent cough or high temperature (37.7+) should remain at home for 7 days. Any pupil absence due to isolation will be authorised. If you or your child are in isolation for suspected symptoms, the whole household should remain at home for 14 days.

Contingency Planning

The Government is planning for a range of future scenarios, one of which includes the possibility of a temporary school closure but to date the Government's preference is to keep schools open, given the knock-on effect of parents having to take time off. This section of the letter sets out some of our plans if we do have to close.

School closure

As you will be aware, schools in Italy were closed last week for two weeks with no prior notice given. As we are in the UK, we will be following UK guidance sent to school from the Department of Education. It is worth noting that countries will be making different decisions because their circumstances are different. As stated in the previous correspondence, we will communicate closure time via text, the school App, Twitter and the school website.



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Should this happen to us, please note the following:

- We will communicate with parents and carers through a new page on the school website, the PIOTA App, text and email (new year group emails have been set up). Pupils can also log in to Microsoft Teams in a web browser.
- Our teaching staff and admin teams all have laptops which will allow this part of the school to run as normal. This means we can respond to emails, process invoices and banking functions.

Children's learning

- It is vital that if the school closes, students should continue to study at home. Whilst there is no substitute for being in a classroom with a teacher, we have been preparing our Home Learning expectations, resources and packs. Children will leave with books and resources to support this and resources will be uploaded every few days on the school website and will be put in the year group folders in Microsoft Teams.
- Each Year group will post a daily learning tasks on the website and in Microsoft Teams (and if necessary via email) which helps pupils participate in learning linked to the curriculum.
- Accelerator Reader will still be available, along with PiXL multiplication tables app and Times Table Rockstars. All pupils will be expected to complete tasks on these.
- Pupils in Reception and Year 1 will be provided with links to learning related to phonics, which families can use at home. These match our current teaching system.

Home learning activities and tasks will be uploaded and ready a day after closure. We have prepared more detailed information on how to access this. [If we could ask you to ensure that you have reading books available appropriate to your child's reading age and ability and stationery and resources \(paper, pens etc\)](#)

School trips

All trips are being postponed or cancelled. Please note, we will follow all Department of Education advice. This will ensure that insurances are valid and refunds are payable when necessary.

Upcoming SATS

This is an area where we are still awaiting some more direction from the Department of Education. Current advice is that we continue to prepare our students in Year 2 and Year 6 as normal. In the event of school closure, we will find alternative ways of supporting these children. However, as we get nearer to the SATS dates, we will hear more from the Department of Education and we will update you. There is no reason currently that SATS will not run, so please reassure your child to continue to work hard on their classwork.

Staff absence

It is possible that for a period of time, the school will be open but a higher than normal number of staff may be absent. We have worked out the minimum number of staff we need to continue to operate. Staff understand that under these unusual circumstances we may be called on the help each other in a variety of ways in order to keep the school open. If high staff absence does become the case, we will do everything we can to remain open.

Further advice for parents

This is a fast-moving situation and at the time of writing this letter, the risk level is deemed low to moderate. Please look at the [government coronavirus website](#) for the latest information.

Mental Health and Well being

Children may well become more concerned about Coronavirus. We all have a role to play in managing this. You know your son/daughter best but together we should:

- Do our best not to sensationalise or overdramatise this issue.
- Steer children away from some of the newspapers and social media coverage.



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- Not hide information from students but stick to known facts.
- Not pass our own concerns or stresses to the children.

At the time of writing, the risk to young people who are not suffering underlying health conditions is very low. There will be a small number of students, staff and your own family members with suppressed immune systems, so please do take advice from NHS 111 and Government websites.

Finally, this is clearly a difficult and unprecedented situation for us all and we are doing our very best to react to and pre-empt situations as they arise, so we are asking for your continued support as we take those decisions in order to protect the health and welfare of The Palmer Academy Community.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Mr D Prendergast
Head of School

