

03 March 2020

Dear Parent & Carers

Re: COVID-19 Further advice for parents and carers

Further to our email at the start of last week we are acutely aware of the current level of concern about the risks from coronavirus and the subsequent confirmed cases in the UK.

Across Bohunt Education Trust and at Worthing, we take the health and safety of our students and staff extremely seriously and we would like to reassure you that we are liaising Public Health England (PHE) and the NHS, and closely following official advice. We are taking this opportunity to re-share guidance from Public Health England on steps you and your children should be taking.

There is currently no cause for concern at Bohunt School Worthing but we'll keep you informed about any developments and ensure we're keeping the school clean, with hygiene measures in place to prevent the spread of any virus. As you are aware our ski trip was in the town of Sestriere, Northern Italy over half term and whilst a small number of staff and students needed to self-isolate following NHS advice all tests have been negative and they will return to school after their 14 days isolation period has expired. Yesterday, the government confirmed that no school should close in response to a suspected (or confirmed) COVID-19 case unless directed to do so by Public Health England. Teaching and all other work-related activities are running as usual.

On 2 March 2020, the government launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

Below are some commonly asked questions and answers:

How serious is the coronavirus? • it can cause flu-like symptoms, including fever, cough & difficulty breathing • the infection is not serious for most people, including children • there is currently no vaccine • most people get better with enough rest, water to drink and medicine for pain	How likely are you to catch the virus? • you can only catch it if you have been close to a person who has the virus • the chance of being in contact with the virus is currently low in the UK • if you have travelled to areas where many people are infected, your chance of catching the virus is higher, i.e. China and any affected areas	
How can you stop coronaviruses spreading?		
If you need to cough or sneeze  Catch it with a tissue  Bin it  Kill it by washing your hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser	You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser  After breaks & sport activities  Before cooking & eating  SCHOOL ETC. On arrival at any childcare or educational setting  After using the toilet  Before leaving home	
 Try not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands	 Do not share items that come into contact with your mouth such as cups & bottles	 If unwell do not share items such as bedding, dishes, pencils & towels

In summary, you should make sure you and your children follow these general principles to prevent spreading any respiratory virus:

- Wash your hands often – with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or an alcohol-based sanitiser if soap and water aren't available
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- If you feel unwell, stay at home and don't attend work or school
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. Follow the NHS guidance: 'catch it, bin it, kill it.'
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home
- If you're worried about your symptoms, please call NHS 111 – don't go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment

To conclude, if you suspect that your child may have COVID-19, or that they may have a sibling or family member that they are in close contact with who has a suspected case of COVID-19, you should call the NHS on 111 immediately or 999 in an emergency. Your child should also stay away from school, following the government advice regarding self isolation, and the school should be informed as soon as possible.

Further guidance for educational settings has been published at the following links and will be updated as soon as possible with the above advice and any further changes:

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

Information for the public: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office and a member of the leadership team will get back to you if needed.

Yours faithfully

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Headteacher