



HORLEY INFANT SCHOOL

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Tuesday 17th March 2020

Dear Parents,

It's us again! Sorry for the late evening timing of this letter and thank you for taking the time to read these messages and help us respond to this challenging situation. Since today's daily Government update, schools are still expected to remain open if it is safe to do so and we will be open tomorrow, Wednesday 18th March. We have been warned that this virus would affect communities across the country sooner or later and, with many parents choosing to keep children at home, we are already feeling the impact at Horley Infant School. We now have a new section on our website specifically for Coronavirus information and there is a link on our [home page](#) which takes you to the [correct section](#). Please read all of the following information very carefully.

Latest Government Guidance

Please be aware of the **latest guidance from the government** (issued Monday 16th March):

STAY AT HOME if you have either:

- A high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back OR / AND
- A new, continuous cough (this means you've started coughing repeatedly)

- DO NOT go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.
- You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.
- Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home with mild symptoms.

How long to stay at home

- Anyone with symptoms should stay at home for 7 days. If at the end of 7 days, you do not have a temperature, you may resume normal activities.
- If you live with other people, the others in the household should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home.
- After 14 days, anyone you live with who does not have symptoms can return to their normal routine.
- However, if anyone else in your home gets symptoms while self-isolating, that person should stay at home for 7 days from the day their symptoms start. Even if it means they're at home for longer than 14 days.

Please note

- If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.
- If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.

If you still have symptoms after seven days

- After 7 days, if you no longer have a high temperature you can return to your normal routine.
- If you still have a high temperature, stay at home until your temperature returns to normal.
- If you still have a cough after 7 days, but your temperature is normal, you do not need to continue staying at home. A cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.

Urgent advice

Use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service if:

- You feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home
- Your condition gets worse
- Your symptoms do not get better after 7 days



ONLY CALL 111 IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO GET HELP FROM NHS 111 ONLINE CORONAVIRUS SERVICE.

Children Learning at Home

In the event of a part or full closure, we are planning to support children's learning with work available through our school website on both the Year Group pages and also the individual subject pages. We are also producing a home-learning booklet which will ensure there are a few activities to support your child's learning in the early days of a school closure whilst we prepare further activities and resources. This will *hopefully* be coming home soon alongside an exercise book(s) and a pencil. Please do not start using these resources until there is a full school closure. As I'm sure you can appreciate, our teachers are currently working hard to plan and prepare work for children who are currently in school and this work is quite different from the sort of learning we can provide online. A [document](#) has been produced with suggested activities whilst children are self-isolating and is found in the [Coronavirus](#) section of our website.

Drop Off and Pick Up

In order to reduce risk of Covid-19 spread, we now ask that parents do not hang around on the playground in the morning, but drop their children at their classroom door at 08.50 a.m. and leave the school site promptly. At the end of the day, we ask that parents/others waiting to pick up children space themselves out on the playground and avoid coming together as groups.

School Contact & Communicating with school

If you have a query for the school office, please email our info@ address rather than popping in to Reception. We aim to minimise the number of adults coming into our school. Similarly, please try to only message if you have an urgent query or concern. As I am sure you will understand, we are experiencing a very high level of calls and emails and we need to ensure that our channels have the capacity to respond quickly where necessary. We are experiencing a substantial increase in requests and questions from parents and are doing our best to respond but may not be able to respond in the same timely manner for issues which are not deemed to be urgent. Thank you for your support with this.

Informing the school about absence

Please continue to use Studybugs to inform us of any absence as early as possible. If the illness is in relation to Coronavirus, it would be extremely useful if you could use one of the following phrases:

- Self-isolating due to coronavirus like symptoms within family (persistent dry cough/temperature above 37.8°C)
- Self-isolating due to proximity with vulnerable family members
- Self-isolating due to *suspected* case of Coronavirus in **child** (see symptoms above)
- Self-isolating due to a *confirmed* case of Coronavirus in either child or family (if child/member has been **tested** with a positive result)

Staff Absence

In light of the new guidance, we are aware that staff absence will inevitably increase. We are not aware of any confirmed case of Covid-19 in the school community (pupil, parent or staff member), but we are being very cautious when it comes to any staff member or pupil who has close family members who are unwell. We would let parents know if their child could have come into contact with a *confirmed* case of coronavirus. We ask that parents do not share this information with the wider community or on social media, as it is very unfair on those concerned. Striking a balance between openness and confidentiality towards those 'doing the right thing' is very challenging, but we need to trust and continue working together to support each other. I have spoken to both the DfE and the local authority about our current status today and both are very clear that we are to remain open and continue to follow all the good hygiene practises we currently are.

We may be forced to consider a partial closure of the school if staff absence increases significantly over the coming days. We will try and let you know as soon as possible if this affects you. If there is a *confirmed* case of Covid-19, we will of course communicate this as soon as possible and seek relevant advice from Public Health England.

Priority Order for Partial Opening of the School

We will aim to keep the school open for as many year groups as possible. However, in order to help with your planning, it is important that you are aware that in the event of any partial closure I will be prioritising attendance in school for year groups in the following order:

- Year 2
- Year 1
- Reception

If you are a parent or carer working in the front line health services, emergency services or are employed to provide care to anybody within the [Government's high risk list](#) *and you have not been instructed by your work to self-isolate*, can you please make contact with the admin team at info@horley.surrey.sch.uk. Where possible, we will aim to remain open for your children, even if the partial closure means that other children in the year group are not in school. We will need your full name, child's name and class and your job role and company e.g. NHS, Helping Hands.

The school website and Studybugs will be used to inform families of our status of opening with an update each morning. Where practically possible, we will announce any planned closure the day before. Please keep an eye out for any messages that we send to you on our Studybugs App.

We Urge Caution

Whilst Covid-19 is a mild virus for many, we strongly encourage anyone with family members who may be vulnerable (for age-related or medical reasons) to think about their own circumstances carefully and decide whether or not to send children to school. **We will authorise absence for any child who is being kept at home in the current (extraordinary) circumstances.**

Bookbags

Your child will have brought home their book-bag as usual today. If your child is back at school tomorrow, please remove all personal items and return it with any school books / home-school link books etc. The bags will then be kept in school until further notice. We are trying to reduce the amount of non-essential items that are going between home and school as well as between households. This is an individual school decision and is a *precautionary measure* until we receive further guidance.

And the Good News...

Despite the challenge we all face, I am absolutely inspired by the way our school community has come together. I would particularly like to thank our staff who are absolutely committed to doing their best for our children. Thanks also goes to parents and carers for supporting the efforts of the school and communicating so openly with us – I have already had a number of parents kindly offer support and their thanks for everything that is currently being done. **Please continue to contact us to discuss any question or concern you may have.**

Best wishes,



Jason Walters

Headteacher