

12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust Schools,

**Re: Update Regarding Advice to Schools for Covid-19 Coronavirus**

The situation regarding Covid 19 and the implications for families and schools is changing rapidly, and as the Chief Executive of the Trust I felt it was important to communicate to parents the great lengths our schools are going to minimise the spread of infection and prepare for any possible school closures in the coming weeks.

Each school in Oak Trees MAT's priority is to ensure the well-being of our community. We are ensuring that our actions are informed and that we act calmly. We are also planning proactively to ensure that all our staff, pupils and parents get the correct information when it becomes available.

We are currently planning for all scenarios. Our hope is that the schools remain open, although we do await daily updates as the situation locally and nationally changes. However, if we do face closure we need to have clear lines of communication with families. Last night, I met with Headteachers of the Trust to outline our continued containment measures and our planning for any future scenarios. Information below includes extracts of advice for schools from Public Health England.

**Please be advised that current advice remains for educational settings to open as normal.**

**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

**What Can We Do Now?**

In the last week we have been ensuring that safety and hygiene are at the highest possible standards in school. Each school has included:

- Teaching our children improved hygiene and increasing the frequency of hand washing in school.
- Ensure rigour in cleaning so that we are in constant 'deep clean' procedures for key hard surfaces. Whilst the virus doesn't thrive on surfaces, in view of the frequency of movement in school this is a precautionary measure.

**Our schools**



1. Families can support this by reinforcing good hygiene habits with their children at home.

### How can you stop coronaviruses spreading?


If you need to cough or sneeze			You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser				
							
Catch it with a tissue	Bin it	Kill it by washing your 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

2. **We all need to be mindful of the key symptoms.** However, we also recognise that these symptoms present themselves in lots of illnesses. If you develop any of the key symptoms our advice is that you seek professional advice regarding what you should do next.

  
**Cough**

  
**Fever**

  
**Shortness of breath**

3. **We would also suggest that families seek advice and keep us informed if they suspect that they may have contact with somebody who has Covid-19 symptoms or if they may have travelled to an area classified as an 'outbreak' area for Covid -19.**

Parents and children identified at risk may be advised by NHS to 'self-isolate' for 14 days. 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.

### What should you do if you feel unwell?

Keep away from others and stay at home to stop the infection spreading. Avoid public transport if you think you have symptoms of coronavirus. If you become unwell at a place of education, tell a member of staff and let them know if you have travelled to any other countries in the last 14 days.

If your staff member or parent thinks you have symptoms of coronavirus, they should call **NHS 111** for advice. Follow the UK Government advice for childcare or educational settings [gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19). Parents can visit [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) to find out more information. Teachers and support staff should follow the UK Government advice.

Staff, students and pupils who have returned from Iran, specific lockdown areas in northern Italy, special care zones in South Korea or Hubei province China (returned in the past 14 days) should self isolate, and NOT attend education or work for 14 days. See [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) for advice on coronavirus.



**The Department for Education have set up an information line for parents, staff and even children. The details are:**

Phone: 0800 046 8687 (Opening Hours: 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday)

Email: [DFE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DFE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Parents may have specific questions regarding the management of their children if they have pre-existing health issues. These should be directed to health professionals who can give you informed and clear advice.

School closures will only be enforced if the containment measures in place are unsuccessful and there is an increased risk to communities. At present, we cannot predict the scope or dates for this. Head Teachers do not have the authority to close the school because of the Covid-19 virus. This will be directed by Public Health England. If this happens we will have clear lines of communication for families. We will communicate with:

- **Parents and families via email:** We will also set up an update page on the school website. If you have not updated us with new email addresses it is vital that you do this.
- **Children via their year group pages on each school website.**  
[https://www.poultonlancelyn.wirral.sch.uk/web/homework\\_during\\_closure](https://www.poultonlancelyn.wirral.sch.uk/web/homework_during_closure)
- **Staff** will work remotely in this scenario. We will keep in contact as a staff team doing as much work as we can through online platforms, google hangouts and other forms of communication.

We hope this information is useful. Please remember that our staff team are not health experts. They are reliant on getting information from NHS and Public health England. We will be supportive but may have to direct your questions regarding management of the virus to the helpline.

Any communications from the school during a forced closure will be shared on the school website and/or via email. Please note that in the case of school closure parents emergency correspondence should be emailed to the school office.

[schooloffice@poultonlancelyn.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:schooloffice@poultonlancelyn.wirral.sch.uk)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents, carers and staff for their patience and understanding through these uncertain times.

Yours sincerely,



Tony Lacey

Chief Executive Officer

Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust

#### **Our schools**

Great Meols Primary School  
Poulton Lancelyn Primary School  
Egremont Primary School  
Stanton Road Primary School  
Church Drive Primary School