



Parent Newsletter

St Mary Magdalene Secondary

Issue No 8 | March | Thursday 5th March

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Advice about Coronavirus (COVID-19)

I know that there has been a lot of concern raised by parents and communities regarding the Coronavirus. As it stands, you should not be unduly worried about your children catching the virus as the risk to individuals in the UK remains low. There is no reason why your children should not continue to attend school.

Recently received information from the Department for Education:

Symptoms of coronavirus

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a cough
- a high temperature
- shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness.

The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

How coronavirus is spread

Because it's a new illness, we do not know exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person.

Similar viruses are spread in cough droplets. It's very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or food.

Do I need to avoid public places?

Most people can continue to go to work, school and other public places.

What's the risk of coronavirus in the UK?

As of 3 March, a total of 13,911 people have been tested in the UK, of which 13,860 were confirmed negative. 51 were confirmed as positive. The UK Chief Medical Officers have raised the risk to the public from low to moderate. You should not be unduly worried about the possibility of your children catching the Coronavirus. There is no reason why your children should not continue to attend their school setting as normal.

School trips

At this stage no blanket ban has been imposed with regards to overseas school excursions and therefore school trips will be going ahead as normal unless the situation changes. There are some countries and areas where there's a higher chance of coming into contact with someone with coronavirus. We as a school will not be travelling to any places on this current list (**last updated 4th March 2020**).

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Washing your hands often - with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport.
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See catch it, bin it, kill it.
- People who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting.
- Pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands: Before leaving home; on arrival at school; after using the toilet; after breaks and sporting activities; before food preparation; before eating any food, including snacks and before leaving school.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

For more information, please visit: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19.

Implications for travellers from the following countries:	
Category 1 – Travellers should self-isolate and use the 111 service.	Category 2 – Travellers do not need to undertake any special measures, but if they develop symptoms they should self-isolate and call NHS 111.
Wuhan city and Hubei Province, China	Cambodia
Iran	China
Daegu or Cheongdo (Republic of Korea)	Hong Kong
Any Italian town under containment measures	Italy (north)
	Japan
	Laos
	Macau
	Malaysia
	Myanmar
	Republic of Korea*
	Singapore
	Taiwan
	Thailand
	Vietnam

I hope that all of this information is clear. As stated above, there is no reason why your children should not come to school unless they are displaying any of the symptoms; however, we clearly need to consider sensible precautions. As a school, all of our students have been spoken to by either family tutors or SLT about sensible hygiene measures and addressing any misconceptions about the virus.

If you or a close member of your family experience any symptoms, I would ask that you contact me directly on romard@koinoniafederation.com with further details of your situation.

Yours sincerely

Mr R. Hussain
Principal