

Monday 16th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

### **Coronavirus (COVID 19) update**

As you are probably aware, the government's guidance on the coronavirus has changed: from the 'contain' phase to one of delaying the spread of the virus. We are getting in touch to let you know what we are doing and how you can support us to make sure our school community remains safe and calm.

We want to reassure you that Witton-le-Wear Primary School is taking all necessary steps to protect our community and are following official guidance from the government and the local authority. Within school we are being even more proactive in reminding children about hand washing. Children are washing their hands even more regularly throughout the school day – we are building this into the school timetable. If you can also continue to instil the importance of hand washing at home too, that would be very helpful.

### **What is the current situation?**

The school remains open – this is the current advice from the government and the chief medical officer for all schools.

This week, we have some additional staff meeting time to discuss and arrange how to manage distance learning in the eventuality that the government decide that schools have to close. More information will be sent home as and when this becomes necessary.

It is essential that we have up-to-date email addresses of all parents. This letter has been emailed to every parent/carer (Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 5pm) to ensure we have the correct email address. If you do not receive the email, please contact the school office so that this can be sorted as soon as possible. Please check your junk/spam too in case it ends up in there! A text message alert has also been sent.

Breakfast club and after school clubs will all operate as usual. The Robinwood visit for year 5 and 6 is still going ahead on Wednesday. If there are any changes, we will let you know immediately.

**Unfortunately, we have postponed Parents Evenings. Also the Easter Disco has been cancelled to ensure the safety of all involved.**

Pupils should attend school, unless they feel unwell.

If your child has any of the following symptoms, they should remain at home for 7 days: a new, continuous cough and/or a temperature (37.8 degrees or above). Please refer to the government guidelines on this.

If your child is unwell, report this as you would normally by telephoning the school office (01388 488350). Please explain what symptoms your child has, as we are experiencing the usual illnesses (tummy upsets, toothaches, etc.) and do not want every child to be absent for seven days.

We will keep you up-to-date with any changes to the situation using texts and email. We may also place information on the website.

### **What can parents do to support the school?**

If you have recently changed your contact details, please inform the school office as soon as possible via email, so we can ensure our records are up-to-date.

Talk to your children about the coronavirus. It may be a scary time and we should all reassure children. BBC Newsround has regular updates for younger children and has practical steps older children can take to help with anxiety.

### **If you have any questions?**

Please consult with the NHS if you want to know more about the symptoms of coronavirus.

If you think you or your child may have the symptoms, use NHS 111 online if at all possible before calling 111.

The Department for Education's coronavirus helpline: 0800 046 8687, if you have any questions about the government's response to coronavirus in relation to schools.

It is a difficult time and it may be that you are worried about the impact this might have on our community. It is important we keep each other safe and talk about these events to help with any anxiety. Thank you for your continued support.

Best Wishes,  
Mrs Sharon Walker  
(Deputy Head Teacher)