

Dear parents, carers,

There is growing concern with regard to coronavirus and its impact within the UK as more cases are confirmed. As a school we are receiving updates from the Department of Education– these are checked daily and we are following advice. At Eastington we take the health and safety of our pupils and staff very seriously, so we're sharing guidance from Public Health England on steps we should all be taking to ensure we are as informed and prepared as possible, though we are sure most of you are already aware.

Many thanks for your continued support,

Zoe Avastu

Coronavirus

What are the symptoms?

They include:

- Cough
- Difficulty in breathing
- Fever

The virus can cause more severe symptoms in those with weakened immune systems. However, there's no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups.

How does it spread?

The virus is most likely to spread when someone has close contact (i.e. within 2 metres or less) with an infected person.

When an infected person coughs or sneezes, they produce droplets that contain the virus. These droplets are likely to be the most important means of transmission, as:

- Droplets can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who have close contact
- Someone may become infected by touching a surface or object (e.g. a door knob) that's been contaminated with the droplets and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes

What is the incubation period of the virus?

- The incubation period for this strain of coronavirus (COVID-19) is between 2 to 14 days. That means if a person is well 14 days after contact with someone with a confirmed case, they haven't been infected.

How can we prevent the spread?

There's currently no cause for concern at the school, but we'll keep you informed about any developments and ensure we're keeping the school clean to prevent the spread of any virus.

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. See:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9VjeIWLnEg>
- 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
- 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
- If you have recently travelled abroad read the latest advice here:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Steps we are taking at school:

- Children have been taught to wash hands often, with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, particularly before eating, after using the toilet. The children in school looked at the e-bug educational package and how/why we should hand wash last year. These messages have been shared again with children emphasising the importance of handwashing – we've taught the children to sing the 'happy birthday' song twice.
- We have been advised that soap and water are best as bacteria and viruses are washed away. If not available, we have been advised to use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser. We have ordered hand sanitiser with the aim of children/adults using it to increase the amount of times they clean their hands over the day not as a replacement for handwashing.
- We encourage children to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- We teach children to cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin or use their shoulder if they do not have a tissue.
- The school is cleaned thoroughly daily. Advice on the importance of cleaning frequently touched objects and surfaces such as door handles has been shared with cleaning staff.
- We will work with parents who we know have returned to the UK from category A/B locations.

What might happen if the school has a suspected/case of coronavirus?

- Schools have been asked to notify their Local Health Protection (LHP) team if they have a case of coronavirus. The LHP team will give school advise on steps to take: ie shutting the school, deep cleaning the school etc. If this happened, we would inform parents as soon as possible through text/e-mail.
- The SLT/admin staff have identified the safest place to isolate a child with suspected coronavirus in school until they can be collected.
- If several teaching staff are not available but the school is advised to stay open we will seek supply cover, use other staff where possible to lessen disruption.

For more information and updated information see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

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