

16 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### Coronavirus Update

Due to the high volume of media coverage around the Coronavirus, a number of parents / carers and staff have asked specifically about the measures we have in place currently and what would happen if we did ever get a confirmed case in one of the Trust schools; therefore, we thought it would be helpful to explain what we are currently doing and what we would do in the event of a potential closure.

Firstly, we are receiving daily advice and guidance from the DfE and Public Health England and will follow the national guidelines on how to respond to any suspected/confirmed cases of Covid-19 Coronavirus. Whilst we need to be aware of the current situation we also need to ensure a proportionate response. Therefore, Swift Academies (Longfield Academy, Hurworth School and the Rydal Academy), have reviewed our emergency plans and developed contingencies should we have to close or partially close due to government instruction. In the event of any closure, partial or full we will use our official local media stations, contact you via a message using our parent platform systems and place messages on our various social media platforms (including our website). **Most importantly, we remain open and hope for excellent attendance unless you hear otherwise via one of the above methods.**

We would like to reassure you that we are taking the concerns in our community seriously and that we are taking proportionate and proactive approaches, these are:

#### What are Swift Academies currently doing to reduce the chances of the virus getting into school?

- We are closely monitoring the local and national picture
- We are liaising with the Local Authority and with the Department for Education and Public Health England on a regular basis
- We are teaching the children best hygiene practice and have sent information out to parents / carers and are encouraging frequent hand washing
- Our cleaning teams have increased the cleaning on key touch points (handles, doors, rails etc.) and are using anti-viral products



- Every classroom is cleaned daily
- We are monitoring daily, any child or staff absence and are asking about any symptoms they may have and advising accordingly
- We are being proactive in finding out about travel arrangements, now and in the future of staff and pupils
- We are adapting any activities which have an increased potential of the spreading of virus e.g. food tasting, meet and greet, educational visits etc.

#### **What will Swift Academies do if there is a confirmed case in one of our schools?**

- We will immediately contact the Local Authority and take advice from them, Public Health England and the guidance in place at that time from the World Health Organisation
- We will then make a decision as to what needs to happen
- We will ensure we communicate as promptly as possible and keep you well informed.

#### **What about staff and children that have recently visited other countries?**

- We are investigating the locations of where people have travelled to as we are made aware; we are keeping records and seeking the correct advice as soon as we are made aware of recent/future travel.

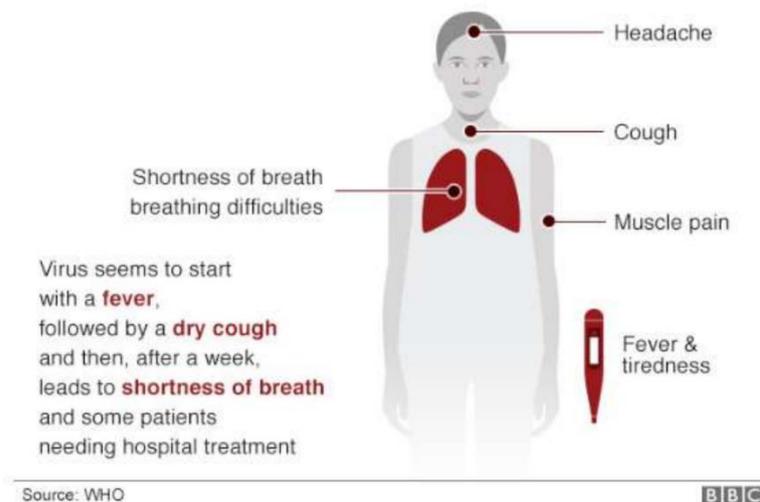
#### **What if my child has any symptoms?**

- If you have concerns about your child's health in relation to the Coronavirus please ring the NHS on 111. **The general advice is to not attend medical centres.** Coronavirus seems to start with a fever, followed by a dry cough and after a week, it leads to shortness of breath with some patients requiring hospital treatment.
- In addition we would highlight the recent Government guidance which is clear that pupils should not come into school for 7 days from the point at which they first show any sign of one or more of the following symptoms:
  - a) Fever (37.8 degrees or above)
  - b) a new dry cough
  - c) Shortness of breath
- If your child begins to display any of these symptoms during the school day you will be contacted and asked to collect your child as soon as possible and to observe the 7 day self-isolation guidance. We would thank you for your understanding and support with this as this

will limit the spread of infection. The safety of all our pupils is paramount and we are particularly mindful of those with underlying respiratory issues and those with low immunity.

- If any of these symptoms are present or you are worried in any way that you or your child may have contracted coronavirus you should contact NHS 111 immediately to seek advice. Please then notify the school about the action you have been asked to take including self-isolation

### Symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19)



The information for schools is published on the Public Health England website. You can access more information on Coronavirus and the current actions at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-informationfor-the-public> and the educational settings guidance is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educationalsettings-about-covid-19>

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](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

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

## What we are doing in the event of a potential closure?

As stated within this letter, we are doing our utmost to ensure that we avoid any closure, partial or full. However, we felt that it was prudent to allow you the opportunity to view and feedback to us, prior to a potential closure, on the strategies that we are planning to implement **if the situation arises**. In the event of a closure, we will endeavour to ensure the best possible education is given to your child.

### Potential Closure Plan: -

1. We are currently preparing for possible closure by uploading materials for your child to work on independently from home using Microsoft Teams which can be accessed via their school e-mail account. Students use Teams on a regular basis however we will be reinforcing with them how to access this in all lessons this week. Tasks set for all year groups will be given which are appropriate to their studies. *If your child would not have access to the internet were the school to close then please let us know so that we can make alternative arrangements for them in advance*
2. In some cases work will be set in paper form e.g. Year 11 will be given past exam papers to complete however this will be logged on Teams as an Assignment so that you are aware of what they need to complete
3. Your child will be able to communicate with their teachers during the school closure via Posts on Teams or through their school e-mail addresses – neither staff nor students should use personal e-mail addresses
4. Year 11 will be given additional materials to compensate, as best we can, for the suspension of the revision sessions which were due to be held in the Easter holidays
5. If your child is in Year 9 then the Options Process will continue as per the letter you received on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March
6. Steps will be taken as a multi-agency approach to ensure that any families open to additional public service support are supported where possible

## What about any key events that are missed?

If any parents' evening, trips or school events are missed due to closure we will let you know about new arrangements once a reopening date is confirmed. If Key Stage 4 public examinations are affected we will inform the relevant year groups once information is received from the Department of Education and JCQ.

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Head of School: Miss N Peaker, B Sc (Hons), NPQH

## Summer Uniform

Hurworth pupils are due to return in Summer Uniform on Monday April 20<sup>th</sup> 2020. When we return we will operate a 2 week 'grace period' whereby it is still permissible to wear our Winter Uniform should parents have been unable to obtain polo shirts during these exceptional circumstances.

## How will the school communicate during closure periods?

We will provide updates via ParentMail, SIMS InTouch and on the school website as the situation changes. Updates will also be provided on our social media feeds via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter - please follow @HurworthSchool on these platforms.

If you need to contact the school please email [enquiries@hurworthschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hurworthschool.org.uk)

As we further refine this plan and in the event of having to use it we will send out further information. I know that this is a difficult time but I hope that this letter provides you with some comfort that we are being pro-active in making the best possible preparations to both avoid and be prepared for a possible closure.

In the meantime, we continue to operate a full and normal school day.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely



Miss N Peaker  
Head of School