



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed



13th March 2020

Dear Parents,

As you are aware, as a school we have been monitoring the situation regarding the current Coronavirus and considering any necessary measures we need to take. We continue to be guided by the DFE and Public Health England who provide a daily update. Any new information has, to date been shared on the school website and can be found in the 'Whole School Letters' section and/or in the School News Blog. You should have received a text link to any information as it has become available.

Currently the key messages are:

- If your child has symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, they should not come to school and stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms started. This action will help protect others in your community whilst you are infectious. The symptoms we have been guided to look out for are a new, persistent cough and/or a temperature of 37.8C.

Should you as a parent develop symptoms;

- You may need to plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home should you as a parent have to self-isolate.
- Ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home.
- Stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home whenever possible.
- Sleep alone, if that is possible.
- Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water.
- Stay away from vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as much as possible.
- You do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

Unless any of the symptoms above apply, we would expect children to be in school as normal until further instruction to the contrary is received.

If your child has developed symptoms of Coronavirus, please notify the school as you would normally do so. Please make it explicit whether they are in self isolation or generally unwell.

Please understand that the school cannot make the decision about whether your child should be in school or not. We are not qualified to diagnose or make an assessment over the telephone/email. However, we are guided by the advice received and we will of course contact parents and send home any child we believe to be coughing persistently or presenting with a high temperature. Coughs can be very common in staff and children at this time of year so please refer to the guidance that around the fact that the cough is dry, quick to start and continuous.

As mentioned on the School News Blog yesterday, we have been working with local schools to consider arrangements and create a contingency plan for how to support learning should a closure become a necessity. While school remains open and fully functioning it is not possible to set individualised homework for children who are absent. However, there are suggested websites in the children's area of the school website that children can visit from home to access learning opportunities.

Should a school closure become necessary, you will be notified by text as soon as the decision is made. A notice will also be uploaded to the home page of our school website.

Thank you for your understanding and patience during an uncertain time.

Best wishes,

Mrs J Ferretti

Acting Headteacher