15th March 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

As you’re probably aware, the government’s guidance on the coronavirus has changed from the ‘contain’ phase to one of delaying the spread of the virus. I’m getting in touch to let you know what Orrets Meadow is doing in light of this, and what we expect from you, to help make sure our school community keeps safe and calm.

We’d like to reassure you that at Orrets Meadow we’re taking all of the necessary steps to protect our community and are continuing to follow official guidance from the government and Local Authority.

**What’s the current situation?**

The **school remains** **open** – this is the current official guidance we’ve been given.

All school functions continue to run as normal. This includes children being brought to and from school by local authority transport.

All planned school trips will be discussed with the venue and a decision made as to whether they still take place.

**What should you do if your child is feeling unwell?**

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

If your child is unwell, report this as you would normally do by speaking to the bus escort and contacting the school office on 678 8070.

Should your child feel ill during the school day we will contact you. Should any child display a new continuous cough or temperature, we will ask you to come to school to take them home.

**What we’re doing to protect and support pupils and staff**

This includes:

Ensuring regular hand-washing.

Lessons for pupils about hygiene and hand washing.

A social story explaining what’s happening at the moment.

**What we need you to do**

If you’ve recently changed your contact details, please inform the school office **as soon as possible**.

Talk to your children about the coronavirus. It’s a scary time and we should make sure children feel supported. [BBC Newsround](https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround#more-stories-2) has regular updates for younger children and [YoungMinds](https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/) has practical steps older children can take to help with anxiety.

Come and collect your child straight away if we ask you to (we’ll contact you if they become ill with either a temperature or a new, continuous cough).

**What happens if the school has to close?**

We’ll only close if we’re either officially advised to do so or we don’t have enough staff to run the school.

In either case, we will:

Alert all parents via Facebook, a letter home and the school website of the day that school will close and the date we intend to reopen.

Class teachers will send home an activity booklet with the children which can be completed whilst school is closed. There is no insistence for the booklet to be completed as we understand pupils with ASD find learning outside of school very stressful due to the change of environment.

Please keep in mind that we’re only sending out this information to help the school community prepare. **There are currently NO plans to close**.

**If you have any questions:**

Please consult the:

School office, if you have any questions about our response to this issue – 678 8070.

[NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/), 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](https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19) if at all possible before calling 111.

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.

Government’s [travel advice](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus), if you want to know whether any upcoming trip or holiday you’re taking abroad should go ahead.

It’s a tricky time and we know you’re worried about the impact this might have on our community. It’s important we keep each other safe and talk about these events to help with any anxiety.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs Duncan - Headteacher