

17 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update**

As you will be aware, last night the government updated its guidance in response to the developing outbreak of COVID-19.

The new guidance sets out that individuals will still be asked to self-isolate for seven days from the onset of COVID-19 symptoms but any other individuals in the household will now be asked to self-isolate for 14 days from that moment as well. If other members of a household develop symptoms, however mild, at any time during the 14 days, they must not leave the home for seven days from when symptoms started. The government has taken the further measure of asking whole households to isolate because it is likely that people living with others will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will help in greatly reducing the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

The Prime Minister also set out a number of social distancing measures to reduce the risk of infection from the spread of coronavirus. For those who remain well, are under 70 or do not have an underlying health condition, they are advised to limit their social contact where possible, including using less public transport, working at home and considering not going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and bars. For those who are over 70, have an underlying health condition or are pregnant, they are strongly advised against these activities and to significantly limit face-to-face interaction with friends and family if possible.

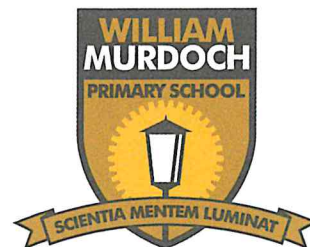
As a result of this guidance the school has taken a number of measures to limit social distancing:

- All school trips for the remainder of this term (until Easter) have been cancelled. Parents will be refunded any monies already paid. **Please wait for the school office to contact you.**
- All morning and after-school clubs will be cancelled from Thursday 18 March 2020.
- All assemblies will be cancelled from Tuesday 17 March 2020, including the Year 4 Mother's Day Assembly which was due to take place on Friday 20 March 2020 and the Year 5 Easter Assembly which was due to take place on Friday 3 April 2020.
- Parents should only visit the school office if absolutely necessary. In the first instance, please telephone or email [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)
- Parents should drop off Nursery/Reception children at the door to the unit and not go inside.
- Parents should limit the amount of time spent on the school site by dropping off/collecting children and leaving immediately.
- School staff will not attend any courses/meetings off site for the foreseeable future.
- All workshops which were due to take place in school for pupils and staff have been cancelled.

**The government is advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.**

This group includes those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)



- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
  - chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
  - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
  - chronic kidney disease
  - chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
  - chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
  - diabetes
  - problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
  - a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
  - being seriously overweight (a BMI of 40 or above)
- those who are pregnant

Further information can be found at the Public Health England section of the gov.uk website.

Presently the school is not aware of any confirmed cases of COVID-19 in staff or pupils. However, in accordance with the above guidance on social distancing, a number of staff members are now required to self-isolate for the foreseeable future. As a result of this increased pressure on staffing, the school has taken certain measures to mitigate the impact of these absences so that it can remain open e.g. merging classes within year groups where required. This is an extremely challenging time for the school community and we are doing everything we can to remain open to support our children and families. We also recognise that a number of pupils have already had to self-isolate and to support them, as well as in preparation for potential school closures, we are developing home learning resources which will be shared shortly.

Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Singh', written over a white rectangular area.

Mr M Singh  
Headteacher