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Head Teacher: Mr M Hickey BA(Ed), PE QTS

March 11, 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

To continue to keep you up to date with the latest information concerning Coronavirus, I am writing to you with further specific advice and our contingency plans for the coming weeks and months. It is very difficult to predict what might happen, but I wanted to keep parents up to date with the potential responses the school would take, if required. I would appreciate your support and understanding in these challenging circumstances.

#### **Action we are already taking**

- Children are still regularly washing their hands
- The school's cleaning company continue to prioritise 'touch points' to reduce the risk of any germs spreading
- Trips and enrichment activities have been risk assessed prior to decisions being made about whether they will go ahead
- The school is constantly up to date with the Local Authority and Public Health England guidance
- Parents are kept informed whenever new information is received

#### **Contingency planning**

The government is planning for a range of future scenarios, one of which includes the possibility of a temporary school closure. Currently, the government's preference is to keep schools open to avoid the significant impact on the wider workforce, with parents having to take time off to look after their children.

In the event of an enforced closure, the plans for Highwood would be:

#### **Day to day communication**

- We have remote access to parent mail and our texting system, and can email / text parents to keep you updated with the situation. This, and our website, will provide up to date information. Please ensure that you check these regularly.
- Teaching staff will be in contact with year groups via their Twitter feeds – these can be viewed through the school website if you do not have a Twitter account.
- You will be able to contact school through the usual electronic procedures and our admin team will make sure that they are passed on to the class teachers. We will endeavour to respond within as shorter time scale as possible – please be mindful that this may not be within our usual timeframe.
- **If you have recently changed your mobile number or email address**, please let us know so that all of your contact details are correct, otherwise you may miss important communication from the school. I would appreciate parents using their friendship networks to make sure that all parents are receiving the communications from school.

### Pupils' learning

- It is vital that if the school closes, pupils should continue to learn at home. Whilst there is no substitute for being in a classroom with a teacher, your children will still have access to:
  - Reading materials
  - Mathematics
  - Purple Mash
  - Times Table Rock Stars
  - Spring Term (and Autumn Term) homework grids with many activities to keep the children engaged in learning
  - Twitter for your children to see activities / challenges being set by the class teacher **(Parents do not need to have a Twitter account; the Twitter feeds can be viewed on the school class pages on the website.)**
  - Children in EYFS will be given a learning pack. This will contain phonics cards and other resources to help parents. We will also provide additional reading books for the children to take home.

### Parents can help us now by doing the following:

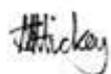
- Be supportive and understanding of the school's decisions
- Make sure you have access to the school communication Apps and check them regularly.
- Check that your children have their logins for the school software programmes – if not, please let us know.
- Making time during any school absences to complete some of the learning tasks made available by the class teacher
- If at all possible, try to replicate school day in relation to:
  - Getting up at the same time
  - Some Reading, Writing and Maths in the morning
  - Some topic (from the homework grids) in the afternoon

It is also possible that despite Highwood being open, absence rates of staff may be significantly higher over the coming weeks and months. Whilst the government are "relaxing" the law regarding maximum class size, I will have to make decisions about whether the school is safe to open based on the number of staff available.

This is a fast-moving situation and at the time of writing this letter, the risk level is deemed low to moderate, although for parents/guardians wishing to keep up to date with the latest situation, the following links may be helpful:

[www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)

Yours sincerely



Matt Hickey  
Headteacher  
Highwood Primary School