

Head Teacher:
Mrs H Sutherland
Deputy Head Teacher:
Mrs A Brown
School no: 2411
Tel: 01325 300227
aycliffevillage@durhamlearning.net

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL
Aycliffe Village Primary School
Aycliffe Village
Newton Aycliffe
Co. Durham
DL5 6LG



Wednesday 18th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

What a strange and challenging time we are all experiencing. It is understandable that many of us are feeling increasingly concerned about the situation – I thank you for your calm and supportive approach which is appreciated by us all at school. As you can imagine, it is also a concerning time for our staff and I am sure you will join me in thanking them for the commitment they are showing which is enabling our school to remain open and to run effectively.

I wanted to provide you with a further update especially as guidance we are all receiving is changing (and some details from the newsletter on Monday are now out of date with current advice).

We continue to do all we can to ensure the health and well being of your children – we understand how precious they are to you and they are to us as well! As I have said before, I am equally determined that we also continue to do all we can to minimise the potential anxiety some children might feel with this situation. I don't think we can eliminate this completely but we are certainly doing what we can to help them manage their feelings about this situation, in an appropriate and calm way.

We continue to follow daily advice and guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health.

I also want to emphasise the most recent guidance from the government about self isolating. Please be aware of the following and make sure you follow this, so we are doing all we can to keep our school community and the wider community well.

- ***Since Monday evening, guidance has been that if anyone in a household has a temperature of 37.8 or over and/or a new, persistent/continuous cough then everyone in the house must self-isolate for 14 days. I know this is such a difficult decision as children often have coughs and colds – I would encourage you to be mindful of the very specific description of the type of cough and the temperature. Please check with us if you are unsure whether your child should be in school and obviously consult with medical professionals if any illnesses are significant or severe.***
- There have also been more recommendations made for particular groups of people from the end of this week, for example those over 70 or with underlying health issues. We understand if your particular family circumstances mean you feel you need to keep your children off school or are impacting on your child care arrangements. Please just keep us up to date with any decisions you make and the reasons for these.

Due to guidance on reducing social contact and mobility, we have taken the following decisions:

- We have stopped school swimming lessons until further notice.
- Meetings at school where external visitors are due to attend will now all be cancelled. These will only take place if there are highly exceptional circumstances linked to supporting particular children/families or to ensure the smooth running of our school.
- After School clubs will stop from next week (23rd March). This decision has been taken as our after school clubs are run by staff external to our school.
- Any other planned activities or events, where there would be gatherings of groups of people who are not usually in school, for example class assemblies, Easter services are cancelled until further notice. We will to rearrange these in the future, if possible.

Measures to ensure good hygiene continue to be in place and are as follows:

- As explained in the newsletter on Monday, all visitors to school are now required to wash their hands as they enter and leave school. Children and staff are also doing this daily and frequently throughout the day.
- I am confident that our standards of cleaning are always high in our school. Les has very exacting standards (I know this from the strict scoring system he uses when he chooses our Golden Broom winners every week!) and he is well supported with this by our additional cleaner, Joss. Thank you to them for their efforts. We have ordered additional supplies of soap and cleaning materials to ensure we have enough to get us through this period.

You might find the following links useful if you would like more detailed information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-on-coronavirus-16-march-2020>

I know there continues to be a lot of speculation about school closures. I will let you know as soon as we receive any official confirmation or direction about this or if the particular circumstances of our school change.

Please take care everyone and I hope you and your nearest and dearest all stay well.

Don't hesitate to contact me at school if we can help in any way.

Best wishes

H Sutherland

Mrs H Sutherland

Head Teacher