



THE PINES SCHOOL

Marsh Hill, Erdington, Birmingham, B23 7EY

Tel: 0121 464 6136

Email: enquiry@pines.bham.sch.uk www.thepinespecialschool.com

Headteacher: Miss Emma Pearce, B.Ed. (Hons), MEd, AdvDipEd

17th March 2020

RE: CORONAVIRUS –SCHOOL ACTIONS

Dear Parents / Carers

I wanted to update you as best as I can on a very fast moving situation, we will use Group Text, DOJO and where possible letters. We are all responding to Government advice and the 27 Special Schools in Birmingham are sharing information so that there is consistency and fairness for families. As a school we only have access to the advice that has been given by the Prime Minister during the daily televised updates. As you will know from the news and the advice from Public Health England, the most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- New continuous cough and/or
- High temperature

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection

If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, do not leave your home for 7 days from when your symptoms started. The most recent advice is that if anyone in the household shows any symptoms then the whole household needs to self-isolate for 14 days.

There have been no cases confirmed cases of coronavirus infection of any staff or pupils in school. As of today, there are about 13 students who are self-isolating as family members have either a cough or temperature and 6 students who have symptoms themselves and a further 7 students with other illnesses. With regards to staff we have no absence due to symptoms, but 2 staff are off due to the need to isolate as a family member has symptoms and 3 staff who are considered to be vulnerable at present. Please notify us asap (before 7.30 am) if your child is going to be off school. Similarly, if your child does fall ill in school it is important that they are collected from school as soon as possible. We are facing a daily decision about safety and staffing levels. We are re-deploying staff to different classes whilst trying to maintain the normality and routine for the children.

We are continuing to take measures in school, such as ensuring surfaces are regularly cleaned, door handles are cleaned and disinfected at regular points throughout the day.

As such we have had to make some difficult decisions regarding what is happening in school. They aren't decisions that we have taken lightly and we are having to try and unpick what is seen as essential and non-essential and the impact that this is going to have. These will come into effect as of **Wednesday 18th March.**



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Parents evenings:

Both of the scheduled parent's evenings will be postponed. If there are issues that you feel you need to discuss as a matter of urgency, then please contact the class teacher to make an appointment to have an update over the telephone.

Parent group and home visits:

Parent groups meetings will be postponed for the foreseeable future; this will include any planned workshops. Home visits will also be postponed and will be replaced with telephone contact.

EHCP reviews

All planned EHCP reviews will now be conducted over the telephone at the agreed time. Please have the paperwork available to go through and we will ensure that the person chairing it and class teacher are available to do it as a conference call.

After school clubs.

After school clubs will be postponed until further notice.

School community trips

It is with regret that we have had to cancel class trips into the community, to places where there is a potential to come into contact with members of the public. So trips to soft play, shops, restaurants will all be cancelled. We are currently waiting for advice regarding swimming for year 5, but it is unlikely that swimming lessons will be going ahead. We will update accordingly. I think that we will be looking at the possibility of classes visiting the allotments as there is minimal risk of contact with the public. We will update you regarding this.

Residential trips

We are currently in contact with both of the residential centres to see if we are able to postpone and reschedule the trips without cost implications. We will communicate this as soon as we have clear answers.

Non-essential visitors to the school

We are cancelling any non-essential visitors to the schools to reduce the risk of coming into contact with people who may have symptoms. Known therapists and support agencies will continue to operate as normal, however school tours and groups of visitors will be postponed.

In addition to these measures staff will not be attending any external training sessions and where possible meetings that would have been face to face are being rearranged to be phone consultations.

We are living through an unprecedented event in England. It is vital that we all respond sensibly and think of others as well as ourselves. The Pines is a wonderful community and I know that the staff and families will all work together and support each other as best as we possibly can. Thank you all for your continued support.

Best wishes

Emma Pearce



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