

26 February 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

INFORMATION REGARDING CORONAVIRUS

The health and safety of the pupils and staff is a priority at Airedale Academy and a matter which we take very seriously. For a number of weeks we have been monitoring closely the information regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus) from the Department for Education and Public Health England.

It continues to be the case that travellers arriving from specific countries/areas are being asked to self-isolate and contact NHS111, whether they have symptoms or not. Individuals returning from a further group of countries are being asked to self-isolate and contact NHS111 only if they are displaying symptoms of the virus. Details of the symptoms and countries affected can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> For travellers returning from elsewhere around the world, advice is that individuals should continue to attend work and school as normal unless they have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus.

We are aware that there have been concerns raised by parents about staff and pupils returning to school following travel abroad at half term. On Tuesday morning a member of staff returned from a half term holiday in a destination which has reported cases of coronavirus. This location is not currently on the list given by PHE, but as a precautionary measure we immediately sent the employee home to self-isolate and seek advice from NHS111. We have also sought advice ourselves. They have told us our action in sending the employee straight home was appropriate and that we should now continue to operate as normal, unless we receive other guidance from them or the local health protection team.

We are alerting you to this situation to avoid any inaccurate rumours spreading around school or in the local community. The action we have taken is as a precaution only. If the situation changes, or further action is necessary, parents will be notified. However, to try to provide some reassurance, we are going further than the guidance given by PHE and have arranged for additional supplies of antibacterial hand gel to be distributed at key points around school. Cleaning staff will also be paying particular attention to cleaning high contact areas such as toilets and door handles to reduce the spread of any winter viruses.

Viruses like coronavirus cannot live outside the body for very long, but the best defence against their transmission is for individuals to practice good hygiene habits. You can help prevent the spread of viruses by reminding your children of the importance of good hygiene. More information on this can be found via the NHS link above.

We will provide further updates if necessary, but in the meantime please be assured that we will take all appropriate precautions to ensure the safety of our staff and pupils and follow any guidance issued to us by the authorities.

Lyndsey Proctor
Principal

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