

Our Ref:

5<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Coronavirus update 1**

Because a number of parents have contacted us to ask questions about the Coronavirus situation, I am writing to update you about how we are responding to the outbreak.

First of all, please be assured that we will continue to follow the advice we receive from Public Health England. Upcoming school trips, for example, will proceed or be cancelled on their advice; and we will only close St Margaret's to pupils if Public Health England advises us to do so. The advice they give is updated on a daily basis, and we will keep you informed about any changes to our usual routine through the normal channels (such as *SMArtTalk* and our website).

Secondly, we have been emphasising to our pupils (for example, in Assemblies) two basic messages about their personal hygiene.

- **Coughs and sneezes should be caught in a tissue** (and the tissue then binned) – or, if no tissue is available, they should be caught in the crook of the arm.
- **Hands should be washed frequently** throughout the day – but especially **before food** and **after going to the toilet**.

Please reinforce these messages at home.

In order to support our hygiene messages, please could you ensure that in addition to all their normal equipment, your son/daughter comes to school with **some tissues** and, if possible, **some sanitising hand gel**? I know, from an Assembly I led earlier this week, that a number of pupils do this already; it's a good practice which I would like to encourage all our pupils to follow (notwithstanding the current difficulties in obtaining hand gel).

Finally, I am concerned (a) that some children may be unsettled by the prominence this issue is (rightly) receiving in the media, and (b) about the risk of the spread of misinformation about the virus. Again, as appropriate, please discuss these issues with your son or daughter – perhaps pointing them to trustworthy sources of information such as <http://www.nhs.uk> and <https://www.gov.uk/>

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work together to ensure the health of our community.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Brierley  
Principal