



Dear Parents and Carers

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) is causing anxiety and concern globally and I will be updating parents as soon as I receive any updates from The Health and Safety Team at Leeds City Council and/or the Government. I am requesting that parents support me by informing school if they have travelled to any of the countries mentioned below. Of course we also have to accept that in a globally interconnected world we connect with people every day who connect with people who connect with people and so on and so on. I also want to ensure our children remain happy and do not become panicky and anxious, so we will talk as we always do about washing our hands and good hygiene and we will ensure the children wash their hands more frequently as per the advice I have received today.

This morning I received the following advice and links from the Government and the Council Safety Team.

Re: COVID-19 Advice for schools and educational settings

You may be aware that advice for travellers from affected areas has recently changed and it has come to our attention that this may affect children and staff returning from school trips. Please be aware that this is a fast evolving situation and we will continue to share any new advice at the earliest opportunity.

As of today (25th February) advice for returning travellers is as follows;

1) If you have returned from the following areas since February 19th, call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel, stay indoors and avoid contact with other people even **if you do not have symptoms**.

- Iran
- Specific lockdown areas in Northern Italy* as designated by the Government of Italy
- Daegu or Cheongdo, Republic of Korea
- Hubei province, China (returned in the past 14 days)

* Bertinico • Casalpusterlengo • Castelgerundo • Castiglione D'Adda • Codogno • Fombio • Maleo • San Fiorano • Somaglia • Terranova dei Passerini • Vo

2) If you have returned from the following areas since February 19th and **develop symptoms**, however mild, you should stay indoors at home and avoid contact with other people immediately and call NHS 111. You do not need to follow this advice if you have no symptoms.

- Northern Italy
- Vietnam
- Cambodia
- Laos
- Myanmar

3) If you have returned to the UK from any of the following areas in the last 14 days and **develop symptoms** of cough or fever or shortness of breath, you should immediately stay indoors and avoid contact with other people, call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the country.

- Other parts of China outside Hubei province
- Thailand
- Japan
- Republic of Korea
- Hong Kong
- Taiwan
- Singapore
- Malaysia
- Macau

The following link provides schools with further advice to try and reduce risk and manage what is a rapidly changing situation. I have read this advice with my leadership team and we are following it in school.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Information for the public: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

In other news, after a rather snowy start to the half term, we are all settled and ready for another busy half term. The snowy weather sometimes catches us by surprise but we all did really well to get to school on time yesterday especially some of the staff who had difficult journeys. It's always a good idea to have a pair of wellington boots for your children to wear in the snowy weather. They can bring their school shoes to change into when they get to school. The wellington boots keep their feet warm and dry and prevent them slipping in the snow and ice.

Sometimes when it is snowy it is safer not to clear paths as they can be more slippery than walking on the snow. We risk assess the situation in the morning and make a decision as to which is the safest action. When it is icy we grit a path from the Sandringham entrance into the school. We also keep all three entrances open at Highfield as we feel it is safer than forcing hundreds of parents and children to use just the Sandringham Green gate. We don't, however, grit the paths from the Shadwell lane and Belvedere entrances in to school and so parents can choose to use them if they wish.

Our Parents Evenings will be held in a few weeks and we look forward to meeting with you to discuss your child's progress in school. On the training day before half term the teachers met with senior staff to review every child's progress and to ensure that we are doing everything we can to help each child reach their academic potential. Often parents ask teachers how they can support their children at home. The support of parents in a child's education is vital. The more you read to them, play with them and talk with them the better they will do in school. This sounds simple and, of course, common sense but in our busy lives children are often spending too much time passively watching screens at the expense of spending quality time with their parents. Talking with our children is not given the status it deserves. Children who frequently verbally and positively interact with their parents develop better social skills and a much wider vocabulary. A wide vocabulary, known as their "academic register", opens doors for children and allows them to access learning in a more confident way. A child who frequently engages with a parent in quality talk such as discussing a book they have read or a place they have visited will develop a much wider vocabulary than a child who lacks such parental interaction. So I suppose what I am saying is, before you rush out to buy study work books or employ tutors, consider how much time you are spending in quality conversation with your child.

I have updated the calendar section on the school website with lots of school events. We also have our list of assemblies and concerts on the website. Following a very successful Quiz Night, our next Friends' event will be a Nature Nurture afternoon for children on Saturday 21st March. The Friends will be sending out information and how to purchase tickets shortly. I will be joining The Friends on Friday 6th March at 9 a.m. in the meeting room for a coffee morning and a chance for any parent to come and meet with us, find out what the Friends do and, hopefully, offer some time to support the group. Without parental support the group will cease to exist and we will lose all the wonderful events that The Friends organise.

Next Thursday 5th March is World Book Day. The theme for this year's World Book Day celebrations at Highfield Primary is 'For the love of reading'. With this in mind we are asking the children and staff to come to school in their warmest bed time clothes (bring your slippers in a bag) and bring their favourite / current 'Bed time story' to share and read throughout the day. We will still follow our usual daily routine and the children will still be playing outside, so please ensure they have warm clothes and appropriate footwear. The Friends are supporting our World Book Day celebrations by buying each class a new book - chosen by their teacher- to support the curriculum being taught and to be introduced throughout the week of World Book Day. They are also ensuring that our library has at least one copy of all of the books on our 'Recommended reading list' for Key Stage 2. Within in each teaching session throughout the day there will be time for reading - activities will be planned for shared reading and older children reading to the younger children. We will also be writing our own 'whole school stories' where each class has to write part of the story before passing it onto the next class. These will be shared in assembly on World Book Day. Parents of Reception and Key Stage 1 children will be invited to 'Stay and read' sessions in their child's classroom.

Enjoy spending time talking with your children and reading with them. They grow up very fast!

I look forward to seeing you at some of our events this half term and will continue to keep you updated regarding the Corona Virus as and when I receive any information and advice.

Julie Colley