



All Parents/Staff – Ski Trip February 2020

25th February 2020

Dear Parent/Carer/Staff Member

This morning, the Health Secretary, Mr Matt Hancock, advised that in addition to guidance currently in place for travellers returning from China, anyone returning from an area in Italy north of Pisa and exhibiting signs of Corono Virus (COVID19) should self-isolate for a period of 14 days and contact 111 for further advice. There is a slim possibility that this could affect staff and students returning from our ski trip to Folgaria during half term. **However, as the trip did not visit any of the towns currently isolated by the Italian authorities, the closest of which is over 100 miles from our trip venue, there is no immediate need to self-isolate if none of the conditions listed below are evident.**

As a precautionary measure, please read the following advice taken from the Gov.UK website.

Information about the virus.

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 to 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no

evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have been reported in children.

How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 meters or less) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.

There are 2 routes by which people could become infected:

- secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face).

There is currently no good evidence that people who do not have symptoms are infectious to others.

Preventing spread of infection

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
 - covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See, [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
 - people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
 - pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
 - before leaving home
 - on arrival at school
 - after using the toilet
 - after breaks and sporting activities
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- before food preparation
- before eating any food, including snacks
- before leaving school
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment
- see further information on the [Public Health England Blog](#) and the [NHS UK website](#).

PHE has a [suite of materials](#) that contains public health advice about how you can help stop the spread of viruses, like those that cause COVID-19, by practicing good respiratory and hand hygiene. To access, download and share this information you will need to register for an account which only takes a couple of minutes.

Face masks for the general public, pupils or students, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

People who have returned from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan or Thailand in the last 14 days, are advised to stay at home if they develop symptoms. All other pupils or students and staff should continue to attend school or university, including their siblings attending the same or a different school (unless advised not to by public health officials).

What to do if children, pupils, students or staff become unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 (either through travel to China and other affected countries or contact with a confirmed case)

Call NHS 111, or 999 in an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk), and if appropriate, explain which country they have returned from in the last 14 days. You can do this on their behalf if this is easier. People who become unwell should be advised not to go to their GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Although the risk appears to be small, we are all advised to be vigilant and take appropriate steps should symptoms develop. Parents are asked to keep the school advised should you or any of your family develop symptoms as described above. Whom to contact in the event for isolation has already been covered in this letter; should you contact the school, please contact reception and they will pass on your query to the appropriate person.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M J Patterson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

M J Patterson
Principal