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Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to inform you about the plans we have in place to reduce the risk of infection at school.

- We have introduced hand washing when the children come in, go to break, before they eat and before they come home.
- We have regularly talked to children and demonstrated thorough hand washing
- School cleaning is more extensive than usual, including cleaning of objects such as chair backs, pencils etc
- New trips are not being arranged
- Park run will be held in the playground
- Assembly, The Big Sing and FAB Friday will no longer be a group event. Classes will do their own assemblies and singing where possible.

Currently we do not have any confirmed cases of COVID 19 amongst the staff or pupils but we do have absences due to people following the self-isolation advice who have symptoms of a new continuous cough and/or a fever. These children and staff must stay off school for 7 days. After this they may return if they have no fever, even if they still have a cough. Latest advice as of 16.03.20 afternoon states that anyone in a household with someone who has displayed symptoms must also isolate for 14 days, even if the original member is not well. This allows for an incubation period for the rest of the household and avoids further spread outside of the house. Please help to protect our more vulnerable pupils but obeying this advice. If a pupil becomes unwell at school we will be sending them and any siblings home to isolate along with the rest of their household.

As we are a small school we are easily affected by staff sickness. On Monday staffing was already impacted and if necessary we may have to consider joining classes together or changing around timetables to manage staff absence. If staffing levels fall to the point where we do not feel we can care for the children safely then we may have to consider closing the school until such a time as enough staff are well enough to open. In this event we would keep in communication with you via text.

In addition, if both SJ and Jessie were too unwell to provide telephone or email guidance to the staff team it is likely the school would also have to be closed until either Headteacher was well enough to begin telephone/email support again. This would be a highly unlikely scenario.

### **Year 2 trip to Lincolnsfield:**

We will be working to clarify if the trip can go ahead and a final decision will be made nearer the time. At this time the Lincolnsfield centre is still operating and does not have plans to close. The site is very secluded and only used by one group at a time. If school is not closed it is very likely that the trip will go ahead but there may be some changes, for example not staying overnight in the bunk rooms. We will keep you updated with any information but if we must cancel we will be refunding costs to parents.

### **School closures?**

At this time the government is not closing schools and we are instructed to remain open unless otherwise directed. It is possible that at some point schools will be closed and this could be for a number of weeks. If this happens school will be sending out work packs via email each week in addition to general games and videos which will support your child's learning. For those answering on the questionnaire that they do not have internet access we will provide paper packs of work. **If you have not filled in a questionnaire please do so at the office urgently.** We are working on home learning packs and will send clear further information should schools indeed be closed.

We will not be sending packs to children before school is closed, unless your child has an arrangement in place with school already. However, we do suggest keeping children already self isolating busy with our Top Ten suggestions:

#### 1) Make easy playdough:

- 250g plain flour
- 50g salt
- 140ml water
- 1 to 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- few drops food colouring (optional)

Method Prep:1hr › Ready in:1hr

1. Mix together the flour and salt in a large mixing bowl. Add the water and oil.
2. Knead well until the mixture is smooth (for about 10 mins). You might need to add a bit more flour or water until the consistency is smooth but not sticky.
3. Add food colouring and knead until the colour is fully blended.
4. Store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until chilled enough to use.

NB-We recommend each child/ adult makes their own playdough and washes hands thoroughly before.

2) Check out the great books, phonics and spelling activities, maths games and maths activities on 'Oxford Owl for home' and 'Topmarks'

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk>

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk>

3) Enjoy some songs and learn at the same time on Jack Hartmann's music channel on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVcQH8A634mauPrGbWs7QIQ>

4) Watch some educational programmes on iplayer:

Nature documentaries, Alphablocks, NumberJacks and many shows on Cbeebies have some good educational content. We recommend you limit screen time to shorter stints throughout the day and where possible watch with your child and comment on what you are seeing.

5) Enjoy Cbeebies Radio- Reception children and some older children will enjoy this radio station and is a good alternative to screen time. Or try an audiobook, many are available online or on Youtube.

6) Dig out some old magazines, newspapers, cards etc and let your child do some collage with plain paper and glue.

7) Play with your child in roleplay games. Ideas could be : home play with pots and pans or vets with cuddly toys and plasters and tissue for bandages.

8) Build a den! Sofas and tables can be great dens with a towel or duvet cover thrown over and a few cushions added inside.

9) Choose a topic your child is interested in and do a research project on it. Make what you find into a book to share at school.

10) Make a chart for bird/car/people watching from your window and your child can tally off how many they see or tick off if they see one. Which thing do you think will have the most?

**Further advice and support:**

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows: Phone: 0800 046 8687. Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday), 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday). In addition you can find advice on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> or the government response website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response> which covers many issues such as self isolation guide and the number of cases in the uk. BBC news and other news sources provide regular updates of official announcements and developments.

The following information might be helpful on how to work from home and keep your spirits up:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-51868894>

This article has useful information about how to look after your mental health at this time:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799>

Lots of local communities are setting up support groups which may be advertised on facebook.

If you are very anxious about the situation and feel your mental health may be being affected you may like to seek support from Anxiety UK. Their friendly helpline team have been supporting individuals struggling with just this issue and can offer an understanding and empathic ear to anyone who needs that additional bit of support (03444 775 774). If you don't want to talk over the phone you can also reach out via live chat support service ([anxietyuk.org.uk](https://anxietyuk.org.uk)), via text (07537 416905) or by email: [support@anxietyuk.org.uk](mailto:support@anxietyuk.org.uk)

In addition, you could also reach out to your family, friends or perhaps a community or spiritual leader, if you have one. One local Christian Community, St Peter's Bourne, offers a prayer email service: [prayer@stpetersbourne.com](mailto:prayer@stpetersbourne.com) where prayer requests can be emailed and prayed for by the resident community in a confidential manner and may be of support to some of you at this stressful time. Please note that Jessie is involved with this community but no prayer requests would be shared in a school context and will be treated with strictest confidentiality. If you wish to use this prayer service but do not wish Jessie to know your needs please note this in your email. We are happy to circulate other faith or community support links if you pass them to Jenny at the office.

Finchley Masjid in North Finchely may be able to provide advice to people from the muslim community who would like support: 020 8492 0028

If your child is anxious about the situation <https://www.childline.org.uk> has some great tips and advice as well as providing a telephone service for young people to talk to a trained counsellor.

If you are worried about the financial aspect of this time please do speak to Lorraine, Jessie or SJ. Chipping Barnet Foodbank: <https://chippingbarnet.foodbank.org.uk>

Please ensure you have the school email address: [office@grasvenoravenueinfantschool.org](mailto:office@grasvenoravenueinfantschool.org) and use this address to communicate with school staff during any closure- it will be monitored at least daily whenever possible. Please do reach out if you are in need of help during a school closure and you do not have any other support system in place.

We will keep you updated via text and email as much as possible over the coming weeks.

We wish you all good health,

Jessie and SJ.

## **Current advice for COVID 19:**

### **Symptoms**

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. (See [ending isolation](#) section below for more information)
- this action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you get the things you need to stay at home
- stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home if possible
- sleep alone, if possible
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- stay away from vulnerable individuals, such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions, as much as possible
- you do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

### **Ending Self Isolation:**

You should remain at home until 7 days after the onset of your symptoms. After 7 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. Coughing may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days.

This advice was taken from the Public Health England's Stay at Home guidance available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection#self-isolation>

Other links:

NHS coronavirus information: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>