

18<sup>th</sup> March 2020

---

Schools

- The Bicester School
  - Bicester Technology Studio
  - Theale Green School
  - UTC Heathrow
  - UTC Oxfordshire
  - UTC Reading
  - UTC Swindon
- 

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you for your patience and working with us to provide the best education we can in such difficult circumstances.

We would like to reassure you that we are taking all the necessary steps to protect our school community and are continuing to follow official guidance from the Government and the local authority.

The most recent press conference from the Government did not bring about any changes from previous advice, which is schools should remain open.

As you are aware, due to the new guidance for self-isolation, we now have too many staff that are not able to report to work and therefore we have needed to partially close the schools across the Trust. This does mean some children will need to stay at home and work from home, as guided by the school.

Please be reassured that we are working on contingency plans that mean even in the worst case scenario, we will operate a skeleton staffing structure. This will allow children of key workers (i.e. children of NHS staff, food and distribution workers, police, prison and fire brigade staff, and those who are working to produce medical equipment) or very vulnerable children to be able to work at the school under supervision. However, it is important to note that if schools do close then school buses will cease to operate and therefore parents will need to plan alternative methods to get children to school, if needed. We are also investigating how we can continue to provide food for children who are entitled to free school meals.

Can you please ensure that if you have changed your contact details that you have informed the school.

### **New guidance for households with symptoms**

On Monday, the Government introduced new guidance on whole household isolation in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak:

- If you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home for 7 days from when your symptoms started
- If you live with others and you or another member of the household have symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill. It is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community
- For anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14-day isolation period.

The symptoms are:

- A high temperature (37.8 degrees and above)
- A new, continuous cough

The full stay at home guidance for households with these symptoms can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

Public Health England reiterate their guidance as follows:

1. 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, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.
2. Wash your hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose, or after being in public areas where other people are doing so. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to.
3. To reduce the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue, and throw the tissue away immediately. Then wash your hands or use a hand sanitising gel.
4. Clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

Please do notify the school if your child or anyone else in the household have either of the symptoms associated with the virus; they will need to stay off school for 14 days.

#### **Where can I find more information?**

#### **Contact Department for Education (DfE)**

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and patience. If you have any questions please do contact your school in the usual way.

Regards



Joanne Harper  
**Chief Executive Officer - ALET**

