



JOHN MILTON ACADEMY TRUST

Ambition · Aspiration · Excellence

16th March 2020

1. The Context

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses common across the world in animals and humans. Certain types cause illnesses in people.

For example, some coronaviruses cause the common cold; others cause diseases which are much more severe such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), both of which often lead to pneumonia.

COVID-19 is the illness seen in people infected with a new strain of coronavirus not previously seen in humans.

Among those who become infected, some will exhibit no symptoms. Early data suggests that of those who develop an illness, the great majority will have a mild-to-moderate, but self-limiting illness – similar to seasonal flu.

It is, however, also clear that a minority of people who get COVID-19 will develop complications severe enough to require hospital care, most often pneumonia. In a small proportion of these, the illness may be life-threatening.

Illness is less common and usually less severe in younger adults. Children can be infected and can have a severe illness, but based on current data overall illness seems rarer in people under 20 years of age.

2. Symptoms and Self-Isolation

Information on the symptoms of Coronavirus and advice on self-isolation are available from NHS websites. As guidance changes frequently, the official websites are the most reliable sources of up-to-date information.

It is likely that schools will be advised officially of any concerns relating to staff or pupils, but if you feel there is anything the school needs to know in relation to COVID-19 please use the email addresses and telephone numbers below.

Bacton Primary School: 01449 781367 admin@bacton-pri.suffolk.sch.uk
Cedars Park Primary School: 01449 778230 admin@cedarspark.suffolk.sch.uk
Mendlesham Primary School: 01449 766224 admin@mendleshamschool.org.uk
Stowupland High School: 01449 674827 enquiries@stowuplandhighschool.co.uk
JMAT Centre: 01449 742422 enquiries@johnmiltonacademytrust.co.uk

Bacton
Primary School

Cedars Park
Primary School

Mendlesham
Primary School

Stowupland
High School

3. 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:
 1. before leaving home
 2. on arrival at school
 3. after using the toilet
 4. after breaks and sporting activities
 5. before food preparation
 6. before eating any food, including snacks
 7. before leaving school
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser 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 (in schools, we are following the procedures issued by health and safety advisers and these are kept under weekly review)
- if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please consult the NHS website. **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](#).

4. Travel for children under 18 organised by education settings

Schools are receiving regular government updates and all Trust schools will follow the advice being given with respect to trips and visits, both at home and abroad. The following information reflects the up-to-date position.

Trips for children under 18 organised by education settings

With effect from 12th March, the government is now advising against all overseas education trips for children under 18. This is because trip leaders would face significant challenges in making arrangements to ensure children's welfare, should adult supervisors or children be required to self-isolate whilst abroad.

This is likely to affect a number of planned trips. Although this will be disappointing for all concerned, where a trip has to be cancelled as a result of government advice, we are covered by insurance and the school will manage this process and contact parents accordingly.

Domestic trips for children under 18 organised by education settings

The Department for Education is **not** currently advising against domestic trips (residential and non-residential) for children under 18 organised by schools. Many of these are essential, in fact, to complete exam requirements. However, we will adjust risk assessments to take into account the [latest health advice](#) and ensure measures are in place in case children or adult supervisors believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 and exhibit symptoms that require self-isolation.

5. Visitors to Schools

With effect from Monday 16th March, all visitors to schools – contractors, parents or others - will be asked the following questions:

1. Have **you or a member of your household** travelled to or from China, Iran, Italy, Japan or South Korea in the past **14 days**?
2. Have you had **close contact with anyone** who has either tested positive for COVID-19 or had fever, upper respiratory or cold / flu-like symptoms within the past **14 days**?
3. Have **you** either tested positive for COVID-19 or had fever, upper respiratory or cold / flu-like symptoms within the past **14 days** which have not been checked and cleared by a health professional?

An answer of “Yes” to any of the questions above means that entry to the school will be declined.

6. In the event of School Closure

Unless directed by the government, school closures will be avoided for as long as possible. In the event of national closures, we will follow all advice and instructions issued by the Department for Education.

- If it occurs, school closure is likely to be a national initiative and the government will take the lead on communications. However, all schools in the Trust will also follow the systems already in place for severe weather. Please see each school for details.
- We want learners to be able to continue their studies as far as possible whilst school closure is in place. Please contact the school for arrangements in place.
- We fully appreciate that school closure could impact very negatively on families where children are eligible for free school meals. There are discussions underway with catering services and Suffolk County Council to see how this could be managed and we will do whatever we can to ensure that families are supported.

- The ICT infrastructure for all schools has been strengthened recently through new broadband lines and the system is receiving regular health checks to ensure that we can provide a robust service. Whilst we cannot control all outages, there is remote access in place for our system and therefore will do everything possible to preserve connectivity with all school websites. We will also post key information on the Trust's website.
- The Trust will continue to provide safeguarding support to all pupils and families whilst schools are closed. If you have any concerns or reports to make, please use the email address and numbers above and the matter will be dealt with by a designated safeguarding lead, either for your child's school, or a Trust officer.
- In the event of school closures, the Trust offices will remain open for as long as possible. Queries and questions can be sent to: enquiries@johnmiltonacademytrust.co.uk (this is a confidential address) and we will endeavour either to respond or to pass issues to the relevant headteacher or to Suffolk County Council. Alternatively, two phone lines will be available at the Trust's Central Office:
01449 742422 (Mrs S Stringer)
01449 708487 (Mrs N Hooper)

7. Helplines Available

If schools are not open, parents/carers and students may feel more isolated in responding to existing, or emerging, issues. A lack of social contact alone may exacerbate anxiety and mental health issues.

We have compiled the information below from a variety of charities that are giving advice on specific concerns for those in the community that are living with a disability and/or are more vulnerable to infection. We are hoping this may be of use to a number of families.

How are charities helping to deal with COVID-19?

- Diabetes UK has provided an [updated information page](#) for people living with diabetes.
- Asthma UK has released a [blog post with advice for people with asthma](#).
- The British Heart Foundation has published [guidance for people with health problems](#).
- The National Eczema Society has offered [advice on handwashing techniques](#) for people with eczema and other skin conditions.
- SignHealth has created [British Sign Language \(BSL\) videos](#) to help deaf BSL users either working in charities or receiving support.
- Carers UK has produced [recommendations for carers](#).
- Housing Justice has issued [specialised advice to homeless shelters](#). Glass Door is emphasising the importance of handwashing and has [boosted their stock of hand gels](#) kept in their vans that move between shelters. [Pathway](#) and [Crisis](#) have called on the government for guidance on how best to protect homeless people against coronavirus.
- Full Fact has generated a [fact check page](#) on covid-19 to help dispel any false information.

- The [Cystic Fibrosis Trust](#), [Primary Immunodeficiency UK](#) and the [Mental Health Foundation](#) have all issued advice and support.
- <https://youngminds.org.uk/> Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544
- samaritans.org.uk Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline)
- sane.org.uk/support Phone 0300 304 7000

8. Department for Education Coronavirus Helpline

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

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

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