



Registered in England  
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## Buckden Church of England Primary Academy

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Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

You may be aware that the government met yesterday to review the response to the Covid-19 virus.

While they confirmed new measures have now been put in place, most importantly the government confirmed that:

- UK schools should remain open and continue to operate normally at this time

Buckden Primary Academy will continue to follow the government's advice and will remain open until we are advised otherwise.

We are working very closely with the local authority and will follow their directive regarding closures of schools.

We are aware that some private companies and organisations where parents work are telling their staff to stay off work and to self-isolate if they have any cold/flu-like symptoms or if anyone in their family has symptoms. This is not the advice that schools have been given at this time. If things change we will, of course, let you know. The Local Authority is in touch with the DfE and pushing for more guidance for schools, particularly in relation to medically vulnerable children/families. They will keep us informed.

We have put together a risk plan relating to the virus. This plan is constantly evolving according to latest information. It includes the decision making process which would need to take place if we have a number of staff off due to either illness or self-isolation, as we would be unable to remain open if staffing levels drop below a reasonable level. In this situation, we will, of course, inform parents as soon as we can, but advise all families to put 'contingency plans' into place should this occur.

We continue to remind children about the importance of washing hands thoroughly using soap and warm water and to use a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes and to wipe runny noses - and then put tissues in the bin. Thank you to all our families who are saying the same thing to their children outside of school and applying the same practice at home. Our cleaning team continue to do a thorough job every evening, paying particular attention to door handles, surfaces and toilet areas.

Our teaching staff are busy putting home learning suggestions together to put on each class blog on our school website, should the school close. We cannot insist that this work is done if the school closes, but we thought we'd put something in place for those families who would like their children to continue with their learning whilst they are at home.

The biggest challenge we face as a school to enable this to happen is keeping our staff team well so that we can stay adequately staffed in order to keep open. We have therefore had to make some tough decisions about how we can maximise this and reduce the exposure of our staff team to the virus. The Local Authority have advised schools to consider calendared events very carefully and make decisions based on risk assessment about whether they should go ahead, be postponed or cancelled with possible alternative arrangements.

Having considered the risks very carefully we have made decisions about the following events:

Event	Notes
Parents Evening <b>postponed</b>	Each teacher would be meeting with up to 60 parents and the risk of infection in this situation is assessed as high. This will go ahead once the virus has peaked. Please note if there is anything pertinent regarding your child their class teacher will be in touch shortly otherwise please be assured all is well.
Mother's Day Shop	This will go ahead as this will only involve a limited number of the PTA who will all abide by the hygiene guidelines.
Cinema Night <b>postponed</b>	A higher risk due to a larger number of children than usual grouped together in a limited space
Parent Drop-In/Coffee Morning	To go ahead. Please enter via the BOSS door NOT via the school office.
Hilltop Meeting <b>cancelled</b>	All information relating to the Hilltop visit will be sent via e-mail.
Rock Steady Concert <b>postponed</b>	A higher risk due to a large number of parents visiting the school in a limited space.
Year 3/4 Production <b>postponed</b> to the summer term	The three shows would bring together over 100 people in the hall at a time, many of which could be grandparents who are in a higher risk group. We will therefore postpone the production and re-schedule later in the year (dependent on the length of the epidemic).
Y4/6 trip to Grafham Water <b>cancelled</b>	As this is a public walk and we have a limited ability to contain and isolate our children from contact with the general public we will sadly not be able to take part.
Koinonia Afternoon <b>cancelled</b>	A higher risk due to a large number of adults/visitors attending, including possibly those in the higher risk group.
All other meetings	We will only consider absolute time essential/critical meetings with parents and/or external services.

Future events, trips and visits and visitors will be considered in line with the progression of the virus and the advice/imperatives we receive from the Local Authority and Government.

I am sure that parents will understand how difficult the situation is for schools at the moment and will support these decisions.

Going forward on advice from the government regarding self-isolation for 7 days, if a family member who comes into close contact of a child in attendance at Buckden CE Primary Academy develops symptoms of either a high temperature or a new continuous cough and self-isolates for 7 days the child/children will need to self-isolate for the same amount of time.

*Definition of 'Close Contact':- Living in the same house, contact with their bodily fluids, Face-to-face contact (for example talking for more than a few minutes), being coughed on, being within 2 metres of the person for more than 15 minutes.*

Thank you for your support and understanding at this time. We know that many of you are anxious and we will do our best to keep you informed with the most up-to-date information as and when we receive it. Therefore we have set up a school webpage on our website, which will be updated as we receive information. To minimise calls to the school office please use this as your first port-of-call. If however you are unable to find the information you need please call the school office.

Kind regards

Alison Anderson