

9 March 2020

Dear parent/carers

Re: Coronavirus update

Here at Ashington Academy we take the health and safety of our students seriously and do everything we can to ensure that our school is a safe place to be. Therefore, I am writing to inform you of our response to Covid-19 (Coronavirus) and ask you to take some steps to help us to protect staff and students.

Other than careful consideration of trips both at home and abroad, our school, along with all schools in the North East Learning Trust, is operating 'business as usual' with no reported cases of the virus.

We will be led by the Department for Education, the NHS and Public Health England guidance and follow instructions from them should the national situation continue to escalate. We will inform parents and carers quickly of any changes that will affect our school by letter, text message and through our website and social media channels.

Preventing the spread of infection:

Everyone must play their part in preventing spread of the virus by practicing excellent personal hygiene. In partnership with our staff, please ask your child to follow these steps:

- Use tissues to catch a cough or sneeze, then bin the tissue and wash hands.
- Wash hands thoroughly and often, particularly after using public transport, before leaving home, upon arrival at school, after using the toilet, after breaks and sporting activities, before food preparation, before eating any food and before leaving school.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

If you are worried you or your child has Covid-19 like symptoms, contact NHS 111 in the first instance for advice.

Foreign travel

All schools in England have received guidance from Public Health England and the Department for Education concerning returning students who have visited countries more seriously affected by the Coronavirus. If you have recently taken, or are planning to take, your child to any of the following countries please let the school know: **China, Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Macau, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Italy and Iran.**

Current guidance is, if a person has visited one of the above countries in the last 14 days and has experienced a cough, fever or shortness of breath, then they should stay indoors and call NHS 111 for further guidance. If a person has visited Iran, Wuhan or Hubei Province in China, certain locked down areas of Northern Italy or special care zones in South Korea in the last 14 days, they should stay indoors and contact NHS 111, irrespective of whether they have symptoms or not. Please note that this advice is changing regularly and you can check the current guidance at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Whilst it is still business as usual at Ashington Academy, you will no doubt be aware of the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the virus and that guidance to the public, businesses and organisations including schools is changing daily. We therefore ask you to carefully consider the recent travel and health of yourself and your children and stay up to date with NHS guidance as well as taking careful note of any further communications we send from school.

Kind regards

Toni Spoor

Executive Teacher, Ashington Academy, North East Learning Trust

