



STORTH C. E. PRIMARY SCHOOL  
STORTH, MILNTHORPE, CUMBRIA. LA7 7JA

Telephone 015395 62517

Head Teacher: Mr Simon Brabant BA Hons

e-mail: [head@storth.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:head@storth.cumbria.sch.uk)

website: [www.storth.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.storth.cumbria.sch.uk)

14<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear parents and carers,

We are all aware of the ongoing situation with regard to the global Covid 19 outbreak. I intend to keep parents updated each week so that we are all clear about our school's response to this outbreak. I also want to explain to parents about what we intend to do in the event of forced school closure. Naturally, we are working very closely with our local educational partners in the Milnthorpe Consortium to ensure all schools in the area have a common understanding and approach to the situation.

School receives daily updates on the situation from the Department of Public Health, with specific guidance to schools. Yesterday, we received a second letter from Cumbria's Director of Public Health, Colin Cox. In the letter, he stated that;

'Cases of coronavirus are predicted to increase. This means that the likelihood of your school having a pupil or member of staff either test positive, or being in contact with a confirmed case and advised to self-isolate, is increasing.'

'If you have a pupil or staff member who is self-isolating due to contact with a confirmed case then the current national advice is that schools should remain open and business continue as usual.'

Colin Cox has also recommended that schools begin to plan for how they will manage the situation in the event of any diagnoses or closure. Parents will understand that this closure might be caused as a result of staff shortages rather than as a result of a Public Health forced closure.

We will continue to maintain contact with you as usual through word of mouth in the first instance and school email. Updates will also be available on the school website and through the school PTA Facebook page. Therefore, I ask that all families ensure that at least one family member has access to the website or Facebook group and the means to share any messages (urgent or otherwise) with family members.

Any messages will be emailed where we have contact details and posted on the school website. Again, it is therefore essential that Mrs Barker has your most up to date email contact information in our school systems (as you know this information is protected by law under GDPR regulations – please see our Privacy Notices for further information).

I would also encourage families to pay little heed to any information that circulates that does not come from an official Government or school source. Rumours will inevitably abound concerning exposure to the virus and diagnosis. Please await official communications before making decisions concerning attendance at school etc. Equally, do not hesitate to contact me if you have a concern about something you have read or heard.

We plan to maintain the same high quality learning provision that the children are used to at Storth CE Primary School; business as usual. However, we have taken the decision, as a precaution, to postpone the planned parent's evenings next week. If you have any pressing issues - then please don't hesitate in seeing Mrs Ireland, Mrs Robinson or myself at your earliest convenience. Otherwise, we will re-schedule at a calmer time!



PTA have also made the very difficult decision to postpone the Easter Bingo night on Friday. We are so sorry about this and will endeavour to reschedule when things are normal again.

We will continue to plan Forest School school activities, particularly those more locally, but school will continue to monitor the situation and make timely decisions about whether or not they go ahead.

In the event of school closure or a child not attending school due to self-isolation, school still has a statutory responsibility to educate your children. Therefore, we are making adjustments to our current website, so that we can continue to provide learning tasks and experiences for your child in the event of them not being in school. Please keep monitoring the website for further details and links.

As ever, we will continue to monitor the situation and follow the guidance published to us. Further guidance is available to families from the following dedicated helpline;

Department for Education coronavirus helpline: Phone 0800 046 8687 Open from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday

Here is a web link to the most up to date NHS Guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

I would encourage all families to consider any travel plans they have for the Easter break, in light of the current international picture of the outbreak. Please keep up to date with all official guidance and consider the extent to which your plans might put yourself, and in particular other, more vulnerable people at risk of being affected. I do not mean to interfere with people's travel plans; however, as a Head teacher, I have been asked by the DFE to advise that some compromise on the part of individuals and families may well secure a more positive outcome for our community.

If anyone connected to our school has reason to believe they might have been affected by Covid 19 (for example, in contact with someone who has visited a destination where Covid 19 is a particular concern) I would appreciate being informed so that we can seek guidance on how to respond as quickly as possible.

In school, we continue to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle as a means to stay well (regular hand washing, using tissues for runny noses, drinking plenty of water at breaks and eating a healthy balanced diet). We will also continue to promote a calm and considered approach to this situation, focusing on understanding facts rather than reacting to rumours and misinformation.

Please remember, in the majority of cases, people diagnosed with Covid 19 go on to make a full recovery experiencing only mild, flu like symptoms. When patients become particularly unwell this is as a result of other ongoing medical conditions. When this is the case, we benefit from having a fantastic National Health Service to support. I would encourage everyone to remain calm and optimistic in the hope that this situation will pass without having a significant negative impact on our community.

Please do use the advice line above or see me with any school concerns.

Best wishes,

Simon Brabant`

