



South York  
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

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Dear Parent/Carer

### COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

I write to update you on the position of the Trust schools in relation to the outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). As you will be aware, the current stance of the government is that schools are to remain open. This applies even if there is a suspected or confirmed case of the virus unless closure is approved by Public Health England. Our actions at present are therefore in line with this. We are incredibly fortunate to have highly experienced Headteachers and staff in all our Trust schools and I would like to thank them all for their efforts to provide support for children, young people and their families at this difficult and fast changing time.

All schools receive regular updates from the DfE and Public Health England and we will put a live link to these up-dates on the individual websites of each of the Trust schools. Please note that the websites of the Trust schools will be where each school will post and update information. In addition to this, Headteachers will be in direct contact with parents/ carers in relation to changes in the circumstances in their individual schools and in light of changing guidance from the NHS and the government.

The issue of school closures is a central part of the current national debate and while we are working very hard to ensure the safe operation of our schools while they are open, we are also working hard behind the scenes to draw up contingency plans should the current position change and schools are ordered to close. As you will appreciate we are not in control of when, if, and how this decision may be taken but we will work to keep parents/carers fully informed of emerging developments.

In these difficult times, we all have a crucial part to play in ensuring that our schools continue to operate as safely as possible. **In line with this, I would like to reinforce the latest health information that states that if anyone or any member of their household, has symptoms of the coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, the government advice is to stay at home, self-isolate and not leave the house for fourteen days from when the symptoms started.** This action is crucial in helping to protect others in the community from potential infection. The symptoms where the action of self-isolation should be taken are:

- A new continuous cough
- A high temperature

If children, young people or staff display any of these symptoms then they should not attend school and should stay at home so that we can seek to limit the potential further spread of the virus. Should these symptoms develop during the school day then those involved will be sent home. If your child does display these symptoms then please contact their school as soon as

The South York Multi-Academy Trust. Please see our website for a full list of our partner primary schools.

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possible so that we can take appropriate action and advice. **Please note that schools will be unable to accept children/young people who have displayed any of these symptoms and who seek to return to school within this 14 day isolation period. It is also crucial that parents isolate children/young people who show any of these symptoms and that they are not, in any circumstances, sent into school.**

In addition to the above, children and young people should follow the advice of regular handwashing with soap and water or anti-bacterial cleanser for 20 seconds each time, covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing then binning the tissue and washing hands immediately after this, and to avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth. Please support us by reinforcing the need for these actions with your son or daughter and stress the part that individuals have to play in safeguarding the wider community. Please also reinforce the message of social distancing from those who are unwell or who are in vulnerable groups where this is possible. A short film giving guidance on these actions can be found using the following link

- <https://youtu.be/bQCP7waTRWU>

The Headteachers in our schools are working hard to keep all our schools fully open during the day but it is now inevitable that there will be cancellations of events in individual schools due to developments at local level and/or in light of changing advice. These cancellations are inevitable now given the latest government advice to minimise social interaction. The normal operation of our schools will also be linked to the issue of staff absence. It is now highly possible that there may come a tipping point where key/high staff absence, due to illness or self-isolation, means we can only offer restricted provision. Please be assured that any action to reduce provision will be taken as a last resort. Should such steps be taken then individual Headteachers will inform the parents/carers of children attending their schools and information will be updated via individual school websites.

I appreciate that these are worrying times for children/young people, families and staff. Given this, it is absolutely crucial that we work together and follow expert advice to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals, their families and the wider community. Please be assured that the Headteachers and staff across the Trust are working hard, and will continue to do so, to ensure the safety, well-being and continuing education of all the children and young people in our care.

Yours faithfully,

**Lorna Savage**  
**Trust CEO**