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Covid 19 - Potential Next Steps

School is following daily guidance from our health consultants, Kym Allen Associates, Public Health England, DFE and Cumbria County Council. We have access to up to date and immediate information and if we have any queries we can find the answer quickly.

We are following all advice with regards to personal hygiene, which is really key. Your children are making a fantastic effort to do so in a sensible way. As well as this, we are putting in extra effort and time to clean any areas of potential cross infection, as we would with any outbreak, and reviewing any school event on a case by case basis.

What is The Current Information for Schools?

While school closures can be effective in the case of a flu pandemic, large-scale shutdowns are not thought to be an obvious next step in dealing with the virus in the UK. Closures would have to be at least 13 weeks long to reduce the peak of Covid-19 by 10-15%. Measures such as self-isolation for seven days for those with symptoms, as advised by the government, have been modelled and are shown to be much more effective. Experts also believe it would be difficult for school closures to work in practice, as children off school would end up socialising anyway or spending time with grandparents, who would be worse-affected by the virus. Schools will be asked to stop foreign trips.

The updated guidance asks people to self-isolate at home for seven days if they have a new and persistent cough for up to four hours and a temperature of 37.8C and above. These are considered to be mild symptoms of coronavirus and people do not need to ring 111 for advice unless their condition dramatically worsens, the government said. Following this advice is thought to be an effective way of reducing the peak number of cases by up to 20%. The seven-day period is based on people being infectious just as their symptoms start to show and for a week afterwards. In the future, the government may ask a whole household to isolate for two weeks if one person is affected.

The links to the latest advice, updated last night, were as follows:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Mass gatherings

The government currently believes that banning large gatherings is one of the least effective measures a country can take, reducing the peak of the coronavirus by less than 5%. The virus is just as likely to spread within a smaller group such as those watching football in the pub as it would in a large crowd. As far as school is concerned, we are looking at any group event on a case by case basis but again, all advice centres around handwashing in transitions and proper 'cough management'.

Contingency Planning

It's always good sense to make a plan for any possible eventuality and we have done this for if school ultimately has to close for a period of time around the Easter Break or next term. This has led to a couple of small, sensible changes in forward planning. Given the uncertainty, it makes sense to have no activity in the school building over Easter Holiday, so **therefore no Year 6 Easter holiday boosters will be held**. Mr Costa will provide children with learning packs. What we may commit to do is more after school boosters if needed, on return. I am confident this will not greatly affect what has been a very sensible and focused Year 6's learning.

If School Does Close 'In School Time'

Once again, this does not mean we will be- but we are planning ahead in case.

If children are ultimately off for a few extra weeks they will need opportunities to learn and some routine. On the website, there will be an updated 'Helpful Hints' page for each class with simple links to sites such as TT Rockstars, BBC Bitesize and Phonics Play, depending on the age of the children. For younger children, there would also be suggestions of activities to follow.

Any school information, ideas and opportunities for learning and general advice would be shared through text, School Facebook and Dojo. If you are not on any of these platforms, I would suggest you make arrangements to be, it helps greatly with all general communication anyway.

Science Week

It is wonderful how well your children have learned and enjoyed all our activities this week. Thanks must go to all the different scientists and engineers who have helped us. They have all been very impressed with your children's knowledge and enthusiasm, they are a real credit to you all and we thank them. It is very enjoyable to share this with them today in an assembly (1.30pm).

Key Dates TBC

Date	Event	Details	Notes	
Friday 20 th March	Mothers' Day	Whole School	1.15pm in St George's Church	TBC, may be altered
Friday 27 th March	Easter Service Hot Cross Buns, drinks and table top sale	10am in St George's Church followed by event in the church hall afterwards	All welcome to both the service and the table top sale, which is raising money for our school library	TBC, may be altered