

26 February 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As you will be aware from press reports, there is some concern regarding the outbreak of Coronavirus in Europe. At this stage it is important to note that, to date, there are no confirmed cases of Coronavirus in Northern Ireland nor the Republic of Ireland. Please remember that only information from sources such as the Public Health Agency and government should be trusted and that 'information' being circulated on social media may be inaccurate or speculative.

The school would like to take this opportunity to share with you the advice sent from the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Michael McBride, regarding 'Preventing Spread of Infection' of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

"There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- **Washing your hands often, preferably with soap and water. Only use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport.**
- **Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the bin. Catch it, bin it, kill it.**
- **People who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting.**
- **Pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:**
 - **Before leaving home.**
 - **On arrival at school.**
 - **After using the toilet.**
 - **After breaks and sporting activities.**
 - **Before food preparation.**
 - **Before eating any food, including snacks.**
 - **Before leaving school.**
- **If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.**
- **Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.**
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.**
- **If you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, and feel you or they may be at risk, please phone your GP for advice. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment."**

For further advice please visit the Public Health Agency website (<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/>) and NI Direct (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/>) for schools.

The school will follow the advice of external agencies and will ensure hand soap, towels are replaced regularly, bins emptied, etc.

As parents, it would be helpful if you would emphasise the 'general principles' as previously outlined in this email, with your family and friends. The staff in school will also be reminded of these general principles.

Thank you for your continued support and co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

A Armstrong

Principal