3rd March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Coronavirus - COVID-19 - Information for Students, Parents and Carers

You will have seen and heard via the media many articles regarding the new strain of coronavirus, which has been named COVID-19.

We have assessed the risk and established mitigation measures based on the expert advice from the Department for Education, the NHS, Public Health England and the National Institute of Clinical Excellence.

Our risk assessment and control measures apply to reduce the spread of all types of respiratory viruses, including the common cold and influenza. The increased risk in the case of the novel COVID-19 strain is that information is limited and vaccination and treatment pathways have yet to be identified, resulting in a specific risk when compared with established strains of respiratory viruses.

We have two strands of mitigation that we would like your help with please.

Firstly, the likelihood of contracting and therefore spreading the virus increases for those who have been to, or have been in close contact with someone who has been to one of the following countries in the past 14 days:

* China, Hong Kong, Iran, Italy, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan or Thailand

I understand that it is highly unlikely, but if you or your child have travelled back from one of these countries, or have been in close contact with someone who has, in the past 14 days or who does so in the future, could you please inform me so that we can discuss the matter further.

The second strand of mitigation is to help us educate your child in being rigorous in maintaining good standards of personal hygiene. The following advice has been shared in school, but you may wish to re-emphasise the importance.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus and there are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

* washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitizer 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 a bin, or where tissues are not available, coughing/sneezing in to the inside of your elbow (rather than into your hands)
* 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.
* people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting;
* use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available (adults only);
* 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.

We have also been advised that:

* if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111 - do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment
* face masks for the general public, students or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

We will be installing hand sanitizer in our main reception areas for visitors to school, to use prior to entering the building.

From all of the expert advice we have been given, there is no need for panic or alarm, but I am sure you will appreciate that it is sensible for us to take precautions, remain vigilant and be prepared in order to safeguard our learning community.

Yours sincerely,



Alison Nettleship

Chief Executive Officer

Discovery Multi Academy Trust