

18 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

COVID-19 and Anthem schools

As the worrying and uncertain situation we are facing with the COVID-19 coronavirus continues, I wanted to write to you all to reassure you that the Trust and our schools are working hard to ensure we are well-placed to cope with the unprecedented challenge of the weeks and months ahead.

While it remains the government's position to keep schools open, all our schools are following the official guidance about how to keep children and staff safe with robust hygiene measures and vigilance about potential cases. Please help your school by informing them as soon as possible if your child shows symptoms (new, continuous cough and/or high temperature), and make arrangements for your family to stay at home for 14 days, according to the current government advice.

You will no doubt be aware that rising numbers of staff absences are causing enormous difficulties for schools all over the country and our schools are no exception, with many having to implement partial or full closures as a result. If your school needs to close or partially close, they will inform you directly about the individual arrangements they are putting in place. All our schools are committed to supporting vulnerable children and those whose families work in frontline or emergency services and will prioritise these groups when planning any closures.

Naturally, we are keen to minimise disruption to children's education, and a variety of home-learning resources will be made available for your child during periods of school closure. While we would encourage you to try to support your child to engage with these, please do not do so at the expense of your family life or the wellbeing of your household. Learning can be done in many ways and, most importantly, children will want their parents to be parents, not teachers, in this time of huge anxiety and uncertainty.

The most important thing is that we all work together and support each other to get through these extraordinary times. I hope you will join me in taking this moment to reflect on the public service being performed every day by our dedicated leaders, teachers and support staff who are coming into school in the face of mounting challenges for the benefit of our children. On behalf of us all, I would like to thank them for their dedication.

Your continued support and understanding are greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Yarrow
Chief Executive, Anthem