



Garlinge Primary School and Nursery

27th October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I wanted to write to update you as to the latest situation within the school regarding Coronavirus cases and to outline the steps that my team and I are planning in order to resume normality and assure you that the school is a safe place to learn.

You may have heard many contrasting rumours over recent days as well as Friday's BBC South-East news report describing the school as having 15 positive cases (staff and pupils). However, the figure provided by the school has risen slightly over the weekend and early part of this week.

Ever since our first positive case on the morning of Monday 16th October, I have been working alongside my senior team to notify families of our class bubbles that need to close and children and adults to self-isolate as per government guidance. I continue to work with staff to monitor all forms of communication to ensure that up-to-date advice is given including liaising with all of the appropriate bodies such as the school Governing Body, the Department for Education (DfE), Public Health England (PHE) and our local authority, Kent County Council (KCC). These bodies have confirmed that the school has correctly followed guidance however, it seems these measures have not prevented the spread of the virus as is evident across the country.

Clearly the number of cases that we have seen is hugely concerning for us as a school community and as a result I wanted to take action that will ensure any transmission within the school grounds is completely eradicated. To that effect, and following discussions with our Governing Body and the Area Education Officer, we will be moving next week's learning to Home Learning. That is to say, children will need to revert back to Home Learning for a period of one week, before returning to school on **Monday 9th November**. We will upload details of the Home Learning on to our school website and will supplement this with support from our teachers and staff via email, telephone calls and Weduc. I will also ensure that if any work needs to be printed, or if anybody would prefer to have photocopies of work, that these are made available to our families.

During the term break the school will undergo a further deep clean and 'fog' in readiness for the children's return on 9th November. Closing the school is not a decision that any of us have come to lightly and I know that it will cause disruption and difficulty for many of our families, but the safety of the pupils must come first and this will be the most effective way of dealing with this current outbreak.

I would urge that those of you with children who have been asked to self-isolate please do so, paying close attention to the dates that have been specified by the authorities, and other families please do all that you can to ensure that your children reduce contacts as much as possible to ensure that we can all start back safely on Monday 9th November.

I am aware that a number of our families are in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) and I am very keen that we do not take away this service from our pupils and families for a reason out of their

control. I can confirm, therefore, that we will provide vouchers for all of our families in receipt of FSM. Further details of this will be given later in the week via another message.

In summary, these are the key points of this communication:

- The school will be closed to all pupils from Monday 2nd November – Friday 6th November in order to break all transmissions linked to school contact
- All children will be provided with Home Learning, via the school website – paper packs available on request
- Free School Meal vouchers will be provided by the school, to those eligible – further details to follow
- School will re-open for all on **Monday 9th November**

I would like to finish by thanking you all once again for the support that you have shown me and the school over the past couple of weeks. It is without doubt the most difficult week I have experienced at Garlinge, but I am also confident that we will be able to once again replicate the successful learning that we had enjoyed from lockdown in March, until the beginning of last week.

Yours faithfully,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Williams".

Mr James Williams
Headteacher