Dear Parents and Carers,

**COVID-19 update**

I am writing to keep you up to date with the rapidly changing situation at Heathbrook. I would like to reassure you that we are continuing to do everything we can to keep students safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

**Will the school close?**
At this stage the government has decided to keep schools open. In an emergency governors’ meeting this morning it was agreed to do everything possible to support our families by keeping school open. However, it was also recognised that the safety of children is paramount and there may be circumstances beyond our control which require us to close.

**How can my child minimise the chance of catching COVID-19 at school?**
Pupils are reminded of washing hands in class and assemblies. This is reinforced by regular supervised hand-washing. Visual reminders to wash hands thoroughly have been displayed around the school in toilets and at entrances. Key ingredients of hand sanitiser gel are now in extremely short supply, making it almost impossible for schools to acquire more; however, advice is to wash hands with soap instead.

We have also increased the amount of cleaning that takes place during the school day. To further reduce risk, we have stopped the majority of volunteers and visitors coming into school.

**What is the current NHS advice about children staying off school?**
The latest NHS advice is that anyone with a high temperature and a new, continuous cough should stay at home for fourteen days (yesterday the Prime Minister increased this from seven days). Please keep your child at home if they display these symptoms and let us know. Parents need to have plans in place to collect their child promptly if they become ill whilst at school.

In addition, the government is now also saying that anyone living with someone who has these symptoms should self-isolate for fourteen days. *Please note that children will be registered as having ‘authorised’ absence.*
How is the school restricting children's exposure to larger gatherings?
Several educational opportunities offsite have already been cancelled or postponed. These include:

- Lambeth Sounds Concert at the Royal Festival Hall
- IBM Southbank Robo Challenge
- ABRSM musical instrument exams.

We are cancelling pre-arranged activities involving other members of our community including:

- PTA Film Night - Friday 20th March
- Babies and Toddlers Group, in The Hub, on Thursdays until further notice
- PTA Coffee Morning - Friday 27th March
- PTA Secondhand Uniform Sales - Friday 27th March

(please note this list will be updated further in due course)

How can I further support my child with Home Learning during an extended absence?

We already have a varied range of communication systems in place between parents and the school. Online platforms, including Reading Eggs, Mathletics and Linguascope continue to provide many children with regular opportunities to consolidate and extend their skills and understanding. Teaching staff are working hard to prepare an even greater range of offline and online resources.

For this reason we need to know whether your child has access to an electronic device that would enable them to access online learning materials. Please email the office admin@heathbrook.org as soon as possible, simply stating the NAME of your child, YEAR group and YES (they can) or NO (they cannot).

Can my child still access a Free School Meal if they are absent?

We are exploring our options for continuing to provide Free School Meals for children who are eligible if they are in self-isolation or if the school is forced to close. More details will be shared as soon as we have them.

Please continue to look out for further communications, check http://www.heathbrook.org/covid-19/ for further updates and ensure we have your up to date phone number and email address.

Our priority is to protect your child and their education, and we will do our best to do both of these things in the current circumstances.

Thank you for your co-operation in these challenging times.

Kind regards,

Ben Roberts
Headteacher

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