

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you with an update about the latest advice received about the coronavirus outbreak. I have received three emails a day from Public Health, the Government and the Local Authority. All three agencies are very clear in their messages and I wish to share these with you.

Ultimately, the advice as it stands is DO NOT keep your children home from school. There is absolutely no need to do this. It is highly unlikely that children will be affected by this virus and therefore, we MUST carry on as normal. The advice from Government yesterday was, even if someone in the household has symptoms of this virus (continuous cough and high temperature) this is NOT a reason for other members of that household to stay at home.

We currently have a number of children being kept at home for no reason at all. We understand that parents are anxious and concerned, but let me assure you, at this time, there are no cases of coronavirus connected to the school and we have taken all measures to ensure the school is very safe. You have to trust us and ensure your children are in school. Unauthorised absences could result in the Educational Welfare Officer visiting you at home to investigate why your child is not in school. We need to avoid this happening.

There is every chance that moving forward the advice will change and schools will be shut the closer we get to the Easter Holidays. It would be my guess that this could happen one week before the holidays. However, we have had no information about this as of yet. If this is the case, it is even more important that your children are in school next week. If the UK Government follow the moves made by the Irish Government, schools could be closed sooner, however, until that decision is made we must carry on as usual.

I appreciate that some of you are anxious and there is a lot of scaremongering on social media and the internet. However, after meeting with other local Head teachers today, it is important that I communicate with you based on facts and facts alone. Your children are safe at Coniston, and as long as they follow the advice we are giving them around washing their hands, we can do more.

If you have any questions about this or would like to discuss any further concerns you have, please do not hesitate to contact the office.

Many thanks

Mr Alan Walters

Headteacher