Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: Coronavirus concerns**

You’re likely aware of the outbreak of novel coronavirus in China and the subsequent confirmed cases in the UK. At St Edmund’s Catholic Primary School we take the health and safety of our pupils and staff very seriously, so we’re sharing [guidance from Public Health England](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-guidance-to-assist-professionals-in-advising-the-general-public/guidance-to-assist-professionals-in-advising-the-general-public) on steps you should be taking.

There’s currently no cause for concern at the school, but we’ll keep you informed about any developments and ensure we’re keeping the school clean to prevent the spread of any virus.

**Prevent the spread of infection**

Make sure you and your children follow these general principles to prevent spreading any respiratory virus:

* Wash your hands often – with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or an alcohol-based sanitiser if soap and water aren’t available
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
* Avoid close contact with people who are sick
* If you feel unwell, stay at home and don’t attend work or school
* Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home
* If you’re worried about your symptoms, please call NHS 111 – don’t go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment

### Returning travellers

Based on the scientific advice of the [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)](https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies-sage) the UK Chief Medical Officers are advising anyone who has travelled to the UK from mainland China, Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia or Macau in the last 14 days and is experiencing cough or fever or shortness of breath, to stay indoors and call NHS 111, even if symptoms are mild.

These areas have been identified because of the volume of air travel from affected areas, understanding of other travel routes and number of reported cases. This list will be kept under review.

If you or your children are currently well:

* Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with flu viruses
* Call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the area
* Your other family members don’t need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities

If you become unwell:

* Please call NHS 111 immediately in order for you to be assessed by an appropriate specialist in hospital, as quickly as possible
* Follow the [home isolation advice sheet](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation-for-patients-undergoing-testing/advice-sheet-home-isolation) found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation-for-patients-undergoing-testing/advice-sheet-home-isolation>

If you have returned from one of the specific areas below since 19 February, you should call NHS 111 and stay indoors and avoid contact with other people even if you do not have symptoms:

* Iran
* specific [lockdown areas in northern Italy](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public#lockdown-areas) as designated by the Government of Italy
* [‘special care zones’ in South Korea](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public#lockdown-areas) as designated by the Government of the Republic of South Korea
* Hubei province (returned in the past 14 days)

If you have returned from these areas since 19 February and develop symptoms, however mild, you should stay indoors at home and avoid contact with other people immediately and call NHS 111. You do not need to follow this advice if you have no symptoms.

* northern Italy (anywhere north of Pisa, Florence and Rimini)
* Vietnam
* Cambodia
* Laos
* Myanmar

If you become unwell:

* Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with other flu viruses
* Follow the [home isolation advice sheet](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation-for-patients-undergoing-testing/advice-sheet-home-isolation) which can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation-for-patients-undergoing-testing/advice-sheet-home-isolation
* Call NHS 111 immediately in order for you to be assessed by an appropriate specialist in hospital, as quickly as possible

**Symptoms to look out for**

If you’ve returned from the specified countries, look out for the following symptoms:

* Cough
* Difficulty in breathing
* Fever (a temperature of 38 degrees C or higher)

If you have any of these symptoms:

* If it’s an emergency, call 999 and tell them which country you have returned from in the past 14 days
* If you’re unwell, but it’s not an emergency, call NHS 111 and tell them which country you have returned from in the past 14 days

While you wait for further advice:

* Avoid contact with other
* Stay at home – don’t go to work or school
* Don’t travel while sick
* Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing, throwing tissues in the bin
* Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or an alcohol-based sanitiser if soap and water aren’t available)

If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

During this period we are reliant on your collaboration and will only be aware of where you have travelled if you inform us.

Yours sincerely

Gail O’Flaherty

Headteacher