



Coronavirus (Covid-19): Frequently Asked Questions

We have put together a list of frequently asked questions to help parents through this difficult period linked to the coronavirus (Covid-19). If you still have further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us at enquiries@merrillacademy.derby.sch.uk and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible.

Will schools close?

We intend to stay open unless we are required to close by the Government. This may be as a part of a measure to close all schools or advice from Public Health England which may only apply to some schools.

How long could schools close for?

It is very hard to say. We will follow Government advice and close for as long as needed. We will keep parents informed via our website.

My child only has a slight cough or fever. Is it OK for them to come to school?

No. It is important that everyone follows Government advice and that your child stays at home. This is in the best interests of the child as well as the school community. Updated government advice is that all members of a household should self-isolate for 14 days.

I do not want to send my child to school. Is that OK?

Children should continue to attend school as normal unless they are self-isolating or the household is. The advice from Government is that your child should attend school as normal and continue their learning.

Will school closure affect my child's attendance record?

No. If a pupil is self-isolating, it will not impact their attendance. We will look at other reasons for absence on a case by case basis.

My child has underlying health conditions. Can I keep them at home?

Yes. There are children that the coronavirus may have a greater impact on if they have underlying health conditions. Please read the government advice below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

My child is sitting GCSE / A Level exams this year. What should they do?

The current advice for pupils is to carry on preparing for exams as normal. We will provide further information as soon as possible.

I've heard that exams are going to be cancelled / delayed. Is that true?

There is no firm decision from Government at the moment. It is best not to speculate and wait until the Government makes a formal announcement. We will try and let you know as soon as possible.

My child is very worried about coronavirus. Who can they speak to?

Many members of the school community are available for additional support. Children should speak to their teachers, Year Leader, or any senior member of staff.

What is the school doing to keep pupils safe?

We have increased the amount of cleaning that takes place during the school day, particularly in areas that have high contact for students. We have cancelled all visitors to the academy unless carrying out statutory work or in an emergency, this includes parents. Any such visitors have to declare that they have not visited a high-risk area or have any known symptoms, all visitors must wash their hands when they arrive. All students have received specific corona virus lessons and guidance which have helped promote good hygiene habits and we ask parents support us in this.

Is the school canteen still open?

Yes, but due to staff shortages there is a reduced hot food selection.

Are trips still going on?

No. We have cancelled all trips until further notice. If you have already paid for the trip, we are working with the relevant companies to get a refund. We will update you in due course when we have more information.

What can I do as a parent?

Please speak to your child about the coronavirus and reiterate the key messages we have covered in assemblies about staying safe. They are:

- Additional hand washing, especially before eating and after using toilets.
- Always coughing / sneezing into a tissue and disposing of it in a bin immediately.
- Avoid touching their face, and especially their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid contact with others by not shaking hands, etc.
- Don't share drinks, bottles or plates.

How will my child continue learning if the school is closed?

As a parent, the easiest way that you could support your child is by making sure that they have access to a computer and a quiet space to learn. This will enable them to access online materials and emails from their teachers so that they can continue their learning as best as possible in the given circumstances. This does not need to be an expensive device; anything with internet access should be sufficient. If you do not have an electronic device, then a mobile phone can be used. Workbooks will also be passed to pupils so that they can continue their learning at home if the school were to close.

If I don't have a computer at home, how can I help my child continue their learning?

Your child will already have some resources with them which they can use. Many of the online learning can take place on a smartphone or via an app as well that pupils will be able to download. We will provide more details in due course.

We are due to go on holiday over Easter. Should we still go?

You should check the advice given to you by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office about traveling abroad. If you travel against their advice, you may be required to keep your child at home when they return.

How long will this last for?

It's very hard to say, but it is likely disruption will last for many weeks and maybe months. We will update you as regularly as we can.

Where can I get more information?

Parents can also get information from the official Government webpages below: Please open the links and read the following information.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>