Coastal Together

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'together aspire, together achieve, together we are stronger...'

9 December 2022

Dear MIJS Parents

MIS School Closure

We had to make a very last minute decision this morning regarding the closure of the infant school. By about 8.25am it was clear that a significant number of absences were being reported to the school offices. We have around 59% of children off with a sickness bug, mainly at MIS - R-38%, Yr1-72%, Yr2-67%. This is a dramatic rise from yesterday, where we only had 2% of the school absent.

Whilst we apologise for the inconvenience that this will have caused, we hope to have limited further numbers of children being infected today. Whilst MJS remains open, any children not attending the school due to having siblings at MIS will not be marked down as unauthorised.

We have been in contact with Public Health and the Local Authority to report the sickness rates and to seek further advice.

As with any school closure we have tried to do some initial analysis, although tentative at this stage. Our initial hypothesis is that the likely cause is a winter vomiting bug - there have also been higher than normal % absence rates reported at High Schools due to sickness. We have ruled out food poisoning as both MIS and MJS as well as Bacton receive the same meals from the same kitchen and there are no sickness absences at Bacton. As well as this, we have analysed the meals the children ate yesterday at MIS. There is no correlation between the meals eaten and those children who are off with sickness, as they ate a range of meals yesterday, including the different options provided by school as well as home packed lunches.

The only other factor which we have looked at was that Yr 1 and 2 made some biscuits in school on Wednesday - all of which contained prepacked and dry ingredients. The Reception class were not involved with this and also have absence rates of 38%.

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The school will be deep cleaned and open on Monday. Unfortunately, due to the sickness outbreak and the risk of bringing 85 parents and grandparents together so close to this, we have made the difficult decision to postpone Monday afternoon's Nativity performance, moving it to Wednesday afternoon at 2pm. All tickets for Monday will be valid on Wednesday afternoon. We will endeavour to go ahead with Tuesday and Wednesday's performances, however this will be under review based on the number of children who are in school and well enough to perform. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused.

Please be reminded that children are unable to return to school until 48 hours after their last bout of sickness or diarrhoea. For example, if your child has any sickness or diarrhoea on Saturday, they would be unable to return to school until Tuesday.

Again apologies for the very late notice of this closure and for your understanding.

Simon Wakeman
Executive Head

Abi Carter
Head of Schools MIJS