

Advice and support for parents

BRIGHOUSE HIGH SCHOOL

How to tell a child or young person someone has Coronavirus



English Hubs

Teamworks English Hub
@ The Greetland Academy



At Brighthouse High School we are committed to supporting the emotional wellbeing of your child/children.

The following information has been taken from Winston's Wish website and maybe of use to you in these challenging times.

Telling a child that someone important has coronavirus

Hopefully there will be time, even if only a short time, to prepare a child for the news that someone important has coronavirus. Here are some guiding words:

"I have something important to tell you. [Name] has become ill, and s/he has the illness called 'coronavirus'. S/he is feeling ill, has a bad cough and feels hot. The illness means that s/he needs to stay in hospital. We won't be able to visit them for at least a week. Perhaps you'd like to draw a picture/make a card/send a message to let her/him know you're thinking about them. The doctors and nurses are all working really hard to get [name] better and we're all hoping that s/he will be well again soon."

Talking to children about the death through coronavirus of other people/people they don't know

Children and young people will also be aware of people outside their family and circle of friends who have the virus and there will be people they have heard of who might die. This is likely to make children wonder about the safety of those close to them. Acknowledging their anxiety is important, alongside realistic reassurance.

"It seems so shocking, doesn't it, that [name of public figure] has died from the coronavirus? I know we didn't know them, but it still feels very sad. I wanted to say that, here in this family, we are doing all the right things to avoid catching the virus. I know it can get dull sometimes but my job is to keep you safe and we'll do all we can to keep us all well."

Balancing truth and reassurance

One continual challenge for parents and carers supporting children facing bereavement or those who have been bereaved is hitting the right mixture of truth and reassurance. Children are expert at knowing if they are not being told the truth; if there are things that seem too difficult to share, explain that. Equally, they will know the difference between genuine and false reassurance. Rather than saying "*nobody we know is going to die*", maybe consider saying: "*from all I've heard, it is extremely unlikely that anyone we know will die and we will do everything we can do to keep safe.*"

Look after yourself

Super-parents or super-carers don't really exist. Simply doing the best you can at this time is all that your children need. Take time to look after yourself too.