

School Closure Updates re Covid19

20/3/20 update PM

Firstly, thank you for your support and rational approach to the issues at this unprecedented time. We really appreciate that you have shown understanding of the invidious position schools have been put in, navigating through unwieldy guidance. As a school we recognise that everyone wants some certainty. We will continue to do what we can.

Emergency Childcare Only

This afternoon we have started attempting to address the requests for **emergency child care**. Due to the fact that the sanctioned list of key workers is very large, we are starting to get large numbers asking for it. This will **negate the point of closing the school** to stem the virus spread.

All we can do is reiterate the government guidance:

“If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.”

Some parents have interpreted the position as if standard child care is available. Please consider the above implications of sending your child if there is any way they can stay at home and your job is not essential to the ‘front line’.

We can already foresee that on **Monday** we will have to manage each individual child on arrival. **Please do not expect this to go smoothly.**

We will be working through the weekend to prepare but you should still **expect delays on Monday morning** as we ensure all is in place for each child on our register. It will not be a normal day in any respect.

If you have applied through the google form and **have not heard from us then you can assume that your child(ren) is on the register for emergency childcare**. However, we may approach you at some point to talk about the rationale behind your child attending school, if there appears to be capacity for them to be looked after safely at home.

For those who attend **emergency childcare** on Monday here are the expectations:

- This is now child care which does not have educational expectations
- Drop off at the hall side entrance at 8.40pm
- Pick up at the hall side entrance at 3.10pm
- If your child requires hot school dinner please tell us at drop off (unfortunately this is still chargeable unless your child already has free school meals)
- If symptoms become apparent in your household you must stop bringing your child to school and isolate for 14 days.
- Drop off on Monday may take some time as we implement this new protocol- please be patient.

Once we have finessed the practical arrangements for those onsite, these updates will turn again to focus on best practice for learning at home. Thank you again for your understanding.

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20/3/20 update AM

From 3.10pm today **school will be closed** (6pm for those in After School Club). Closure is to help stem the spread of the virus. We will reopen next week, only for particular vulnerable children and those who have parents working in defined critical and key sector roles (as below). Unfortunately, the information we need to move our planning forward, expected yesterday, did not arrive until the early hours of this morning. This means that we need more time to plan- we expect to be inundated with queries because of the urgency and nature of the guidance. It is vital that we organise everything correctly and do not make errors by rushing. We will be finalising the new arrangements within school and with individual parents through today, the weekend and even on Monday.

If Section 1 below about 'vulnerable' children or critical and key sector worker roles does not apply to you, please go to Section 2 at the bottom. If you think it applies to you please read everything on this update.

Section 1:

Parents in Critical or Key Sector Roles

(Reduced provision - 'care for a limited number of children')

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for reduced provision:

Note from DfE Guidance: 'If workers think they fall within the critical categories below they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.'

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to:

- doctors
- nurses
- midwives
- paramedics
- social workers
- care workers
- other frontline health
- social care staff including volunteers
- support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector
- those working as part of the health and social care supply chain (including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment).

Education and childcare

- nursery staff
- teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals (who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.)

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Key public services

This includes those essential to the running of the:

- justice system
- religious staff
- charities and workers delivering key frontline services
- management of the deceased
- journalists and broadcasters (who are providing public service broadcasting.)

Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations:

- essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response
- delivering essential public services (such as the payment of benefits including in government agencies and arms-length bodies.)

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in:

- food production
- processing
- distribution
- sale and delivery
- provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes:

- police and support staff
- Ministry of Defence civilians
- contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic)
- fire and rescue service employees (including support staff)
- National Crime Agency staff
- those maintaining border security
- prison and probation staff
- other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep these operation modes running, during the COVID-19 response:

- air
- water
- road and rail passenger
- freight transport
- those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

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Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential services provision, including but not limited to:

- workers in banks
- building societies
- financial market infrastructure
- the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage)
- information technology and data infrastructure sector
- primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response
- key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications, including but not limited to:
 - network operations
 - field engineering
 - call centre staff
 - IT and data infrastructure
 - 999 and 111 critical services
 - postal services and delivery
 - payments providers
 - waste disposal sectors

If you require a place based on all the above information please first and foremost, confirm with your employer that your ***'specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.'*** If so, then please do complete the Critical Worker registration form that will shortly be sent on ParentPay.

Vulnerable Children

DfE defines 'vulnerable' children as those who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with [education, health and care \(EHC\) plans](#).

All these children are known to us at school and school will be communicating with those parents.

A guide for those who are offered 'reduced provision' on the above criteria

We will operate normal school hours of 8.40am to 3.10pm for these children. Provision will be based on child care but with access to learning resources. We will not be operating extended schools services (breakfast and after school club).

We expect to be flexible with attendance and just ask that you attempt to give us 2 days notice when you want your child to start or stop attending- this is to ensure we have the appropriate staffing in place.

As you can imagine, there is no agreed policy in place for any of the operational arrangements. This is emergency childcare/reduced provision, if you have queries about the provision, we will talk to you individually to clarify government guidance directing schools. Government isolation rules still apply, inform us if your child will discontinue attendance due to isolation.

If, due to lack of staff through isolation or illness, school is forced to close during this period, we will inform those on the register by the normal procedures.

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Section 2:

Please now read these statements directly from the guidance:

If children can **stay safely at home**, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who **absolutely need to attend**.

It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and **cannot be safely cared for at home**.

We have been asked to emphasise that **only parents who have been offered a place can attend school from Monday**. We cannot admit your child if we have not pre-arranged it. However, we will **constantly review** the situation and **follow updated guidance** on changing this offer. We will communicate any changes in this document as soon as we know more. If closure becomes a **longer term** matter, it is assumed that **Local Authorities will create procedures** by which schools will begin to operate.

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19/3/20 update

Rationale for this new update document

- it will be **updated** whenever we have new information
- It will cover **general information about learning at home**. (Specific guidance for learning at home should be addressed with your child's teacher through Google Classroom or any other means that the teacher communicates to you)
- It will cover **general arrangements for any partial opening** for key workers and vulnerable children
- It will cover **arrangements for reopening** when we know more

We continue to prepare the children for learning at home, which will begin on Monday. Again, please bear in mind that teachers time may be split between managing the online learning and working with children onsite.

Some initial ideas for supporting the home learning environment

- Try to set a routine- it doesn't have to be a timetable- just some basic expectations about what will be achieved during the day/week
- As you know, time routines also help everyone feel in control and aids smooth running/behaviour
- It's particularly effective for retention for children to review what they learnt in their last session, before moving on to something new
- If asking your child questions about what they are learning, keep the question 'open'. Closed questions are ones which have a single answer, open questions usually starting 'Why' or 'How' are more beneficial for thinking.
- It is now widely recognised that the key to learning success is a wide vocabulary so spend time exploring/unpicking the vocabulary of the subject. For further reference please see the year group learning organisers we sent out at the start of the term.
- As well as getting to grips with Google Classroom, remember there are resources on the school website.

Logistics, Key Workers and Vulnerable Pupils

Schools have not yet been sent clarification on the criteria for key worker and vulnerable children. Once we receive confirmation we will outline the criteria here and ask parents to contact us based on their need for school care.

Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium- food vouchers

For pupils who receive free school meals (only those who are eligible since they are on a lower income, not Universal Free School Meals). The school will be organising a voucher scheme for a local supermarket chain. If your child is registered as having free school meals talk to the office in confidence to obtain these vouchers.