

School Closure Updates re Covid19

10/5/2020 update

The government and associated experts continue to gain an understanding of the best way to cope with the virus while working out the best methods to manage social movement.

We assume that the Prime Minister will mention schools in his lockdown exit strategy today but that the initial announcement will be short. We know that any short statement will cause many more questions than answers initially.

We know that the government are still closely watching countries which have reopened primary schools; monitoring their practices and data.

Following school specific announcements the DfE usually updates their guidance to schools- this arrives 1 to 2 days later but could be longer for a larger announcement.

After this there is sometimes further expert analysis which helps refine the guidance by looking at all possible issues, this takes more time to complete.

We will continue not to speculate about how to manage school reopening until we know the facts. Through this crisis, the leadership team and all office staff have planned and modelled eventualities continuously. In the coming weeks, we hope to gain the information necessary to finalise our discussions on all areas including (but not limited to) event timelines, school timings, finances, premises actions, future staff timetabling, pupil risk assessing, distance control, vulnerable staff/child planning, dual (home and school) teaching methods, etc. This, in turn, will allow us to start fine tuning the models of reopening.

I emphasise that this is still 'modelling' because I expect we still won't have full or complete guidance immediately. Therefore we will have to continue planning for multiple scenarios. Considering the example in the last update- it's a model scenario, not necessarily *the* plan of action. We will continue to refine the models whenever new information is communicated by DfE or the government.

You will have many questions, most of which the media continue to speculate upon, sometimes causing even more concern. We have all your questions also. For example, at a virtual meeting with almost 4000 school leaders last Thursday evening many questions anticipated your concerns such as how to prioritise child nurture while social distancing and how to handle possible year group prioritisation. With this in mind, there is no need to contact us with questions about what we plan to do- it is much more efficient for us to tell you everything in this update instead of replying to individual emails about general operations. Everything we know will continue to be in this update, individual discussions will take place when the time is right, especially for specifically vulnerable children.

In short, whatever we do next will be carefully orchestrated, carefully considered and based on the guidance when it arrives. This is an unprecedented pilot of a new, eventual return to school and we will take time to implement everything as best we can.

I will now close down this update document and start a new one which will continue to inform you of our roadmap towards reopening.

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Contact

Please remember that the school office is now running entirely virtually, please email office.2609@ladygrove-park.oxon.sch.uk with any queries or relevant updates to personal circumstances.



30/4/20 update

It's another long update but it is in sections so you can easily skim read if necessary.

What we know/current situation

As many of the staff are parents too, we know that balancing working from home with your child learning at home is tough. Our congratulations and appreciation to you for your continuing efforts.

Following the prime minister's briefing yesterday we now know that the lockdown will continue for longer but no one can be sure for how long. Some of the key indicators have not been met and the government are continuing to be cautious so as not to cause a second wave. We expect that the announcement of their exit plans next week will not necessarily mean that plan implementation will be immediate.

We recognise that the lockdown was initiated in all sectors at once therefore there is uncertainty about which aspects of lockdown are effective and which need to be eased first or last.

There continues to be a vast amount of news articles and stories about schooling, many contradicting each other or inappropriately comparing very different cultural approaches. The most distracting articles take suggestions by experts and relay them as definite outcomes. For this reason, as ever, we will follow the government guidance. We have been assured that we will be given fair warning on the next steps we must take. Nevertheless, we continue to model all possibilities...

Our continued planning for eventual reopening

The Senior Leadership Team have been continuously modelling this, while also anticipating parent and health issues, since we are working parents ourselves.

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Although it's early to do so, I'd like to give you an idea of the depth of the debate. I recently reworked the furniture in a classroom to create an environment with 2 metre physical distancing. No more than 10 children can sit in one class. This equates to one year group using 6 classrooms. Along with the appropriate use of all other communal areas, this then scales up to two year groups per day and a possible attendance of one day per week for each pupil. Furthermore, while physical (social) distancing rules are in place there are many other considerations such as: one way systems, extremely staggered lunch times, extra cleaning expectations/timings, individual staff teaching a number of different year groups, teachers having the dual role as they continue to create online content, staggered school opening, home to school and sibling spread issues, premises restrictions, altered close care arrangements, altered attendance guidance, children learning new rules for appropriate socialising, families and staff with different levels of health need and much more. This illustrates the mammoth task ahead for opening schools nationally but, rest assured, we will step up to it!

Childrens' reintegration in to class learning

Teachers have been thinking about this issue from the moment they started online teaching. When we return it will be necessary to revisit all learning carried out during lockdown to ensure there are no gaps or inconsistencies in understanding between pupils who have had different experiences at home. Teachers are well versed in methods of mastery to handle a vast range of abilities but this will be more pronounced for a time. Some will feel they have not experienced the aspects of learning enough and others who feel they need not repeat what they have done. All will be catered for using a mastery/depth approach.

Childrens' social reintegration

In short, this will have to be handled carefully and we already assume that the focus on mental health will continue to be high priority. When we do return, it is likely to be to a 'new normal'. For example: pupils may need to draw more on independence such as using their own resources and not sharing between each other- therefore continuously mislaying your pencil becomes a larger issue involving sanitation! Furthermore keeping appropriate distance will become an unwritten rule (unless special care is needed- to support, medicate, give first aid, intervene, etc).

Current Home Schooling

VE Day- Friday 8th May

The upcoming Bank Holiday is a VE celebration on Fri 8th May. There will be no online teaching on this day. However, as a school we would like to encourage participation in the Great British Bunting activity. You can read about this on the BBC website <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/4TrqYDyf4PMdLypxzyTwGDg/great-british-bunting> which includes bunting design instructions. We also thought it would be a further act of solidarity if our children incorporated LPPS in to the bunting, possibly using our strapline- Collaborate (Collaborators), Role Model (Role Models) and Think (Thinkers). These appear to be suitable to the occasion and our situation. Make this idea your own and send us a photo of what you did. If you don't think this is a good idea, please ignore it.

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Nevertheless, I can imagine how nice it would be, during your exercise time, to see the LPPS community on display within the Ladygrove Estate and further around Didcot.

Setbacks and complications when learning at home

Remember to allow for your child to experience and deal, to some extent, with their own setbacks. Don't always step in immediately to sort out a complication (unless it's a safety issue of course). This is sometimes hard but helps longer terms with independence levels.

Even more safety guidance

CEOPS holds a wealth of information about safety online. The link has always been on our website home page and can also be easily found by searching 'CEOPS'.

Of particular interest is the latest information on video conferencing:

<https://parentinfo.org/article/video-chatting-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers-of-primary-school-age-children>

As for school provision: our lessons will continue to be through Google Classroom and some aspects might include short recorded video, if the teacher feels this is useful/appropriate to the subject. There will continue to be no 'live lessons' at this time.

The Online and Onsite provision by all our staff

My huge thanks to all our staff. Our teachers and TAs weren't originally employed for an online teaching profession, they have adapted quickly and shown great resilience while learning how to create the best provision. Along with the Office and Premises staff, they continue to be such a motivated and positive team who are getting a great job done with the circumstances we have been dealt.

Summer Term Matters

New follow up on pupils not engaging with online teaching

In order to support those pupils who have not engaged with online teaching for more than 2 weeks, teachers will now start getting in touch directly with their parents to help. If non engagement continues for a week after teacher contact the SLT will be in touch to discuss the best ways to get the pupil re-engaged going forward.

Reports

There will still be end of year reports for each child. We are currently refining the format of these to best fit the more limited information and teaching time. More on this in a future update.

Residential and Trip Refunds

As stated previously, our intention is to refund any trips which do not take place. We can only refund when we ourselves obtain the refund from the organisations involved. This is often not straight forward- we don't simply have a pot of contributed money from which we repay. We are having to chase various companies and insurance companies for it. Be assured that refunds will be with you as soon as we obtain them.

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Exams

It has already been established that national tests (SATs, GCSEs, A Levels) will not go ahead this year, even if we return in time for their original implementation. More on this in a future update.

Critical worker onsite childcare

We will expect to observe the upcoming Bank Holiday on Friday 8th May as we did the Easter bank holidays- by fully closing the school. If this poses a problem please contact us to discuss.

In other news- last but not least

I mentioned earlier that all the SLT have children and this helps with our empathy in dealing with this current situation. Those familiar with our KS2 Deputy Headteacher might have questioned my accuracy but, yes, this does include Mrs Clarkson who is due to give birth in June. We have been waiting for the right time to announce this but frankly one has not been forthcoming. Therefore, we now wish Carly and Oliver the very best and look forward to hearing about their journey as new parents. During Mrs Clarkson's maternity leave, Mrs Carrie Barringer (our SLT Inclusion Manager) will be Acting Deputy Head with responsibility for KS2.

Contact

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20/4/20 update

As the national departments and systems now begin to catch up we anticipate that we will start to get more information on many aspects of schooling. As before, we will update you with the relevant information as soon as it is forthcoming.

Status of Schools

The Education Secretary announced yesterday that schools will continue to be closed for now. The latest guidance made available to schools and the public this morning states: "We will only re-open schools when the scientific advice indicates it is safe to do so, and will engage closely with the sector on our approach."

I expect that 'engaging with the sector' involves talking to unions and national advisers.

So we continue with the **online learning 'stopgap'**, restarting today following the Easter break. We now know that this will be the case for at least another 3 weeks. With this in mind, here is our **further guidance to ensure best practice** and to minimise issues while working online at home:

The overriding principle is that all staff and parents should apply common sense to online use. It is simply not possible for us to write a set of rules which cover every eventuality and

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it should not be assumed that an omission of statement about a particular situation/circumstances/event means that it is therefore acceptable. In short: **for each online activity the parent must ask: is this safe, are the risks mitigated?** If you feel it is not, it is your responsibility to stop the child's activity. The bullet points directly below form a more specific reference, if you need it.

- LPPS uses Google Classrooms as the main method for online teaching delivery while pupils are working from home. This has filter systems created by Google with the protection of pupils in mind.
- It should be understood by all users that the school's onsite filtering system does not work at home (for example when using Google search at home). It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the best filtering methods are selected on devices.
- It is not possible to list the filtering methods for every device (of every age and varied operating systems) therefore the parent should spend time familiarising themselves with settings on the child's device. Youtube and Google searches are effective for finding out how to change settings to ensure strong filtering/limiting.
- If you are not confident in altering the settings then it will be necessary to monitor your child's online use continuously or, in the extreme, you may have to consider ceasing online activity.
- School's online systems should be used for educational purposes only. For example: school email addresses should not be used to set up subscriptions or profiles with third party companies- and specifically not for video conferencing purposes.
- Video conferencing has recently been documented by the media for certain fallibilities, parents should make themselves familiar with the functions of any video conference before using one and it is strongly recommended that they closely control any conference which involves their child.
- School's collaborative work online usually involves groups e.g. whole class Google Classroom discussions. Individual child contact is also acceptable for specific learning needs (e.g. specific support of a child with an EHCP) as agreed between the school and parent.
- For photos or videos- in the posting and sharing of activities, staff, parents and children should wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household. Where possible there should be a neutral background (eg. no personal wall photos etc). The school's policy for use of photographs remains in place and extends to screenshots.
- Any online devices should be used in appropriate areas, for example, bedrooms might not be appropriate and bathrooms are certainly not.
- Google Classrooms ensures a documented record of activities and interactions, so that if any issues were to arise, the Classroom Stream can be reviewed.
- Language should be professional and appropriate, including from any family members. Teachers have the right to remove any material posted by pupils which they deem inappropriate.
- Please note that there is no statutory obligation to undertake online teaching but most schools are now using existing technology to set pupils' work and activities. However, some or all online activities may have to be withdrawn if an amount of online issues encountered weigh too heavily on the implementation of the specific activity.
- It should be understood that no amount of preparation will replicate the typical school day, and any attempt to provide educational continuity will be carried out with the aim of supporting parents in the education of their child.
- Parents should consider creating a simple "acceptable use policy" for home. This can outline expectations of use, limitations, what to do if things go wrong and sanctions. The school cannot write this for you because there are too many variables between households and their device use.

What to do if things go wrong online

As the responsible adult: anticipate first- look for the signs.

- Has your child become more secretive about their online use or are they generally open/happy to talk about their activities?
- Has your child's mood changed significantly following an online interaction- specifically becoming much more anxious. Some children are commonly anxious,

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gauge if this has become significantly worse suddenly. (Unfortunately this will be more difficult to judge due to our lockdown circumstances)

- Does your child attempt to hide the screen when you walk in?

These are only indicators- they do not automatically represent a fact that something is wrong.

Prepare your child: when explaining the problems presented by online activity, it's a fine line between creating fear of online communication and taking prudent action. Your child mustn't be scared about the possibility of something inappropriate happening online, they must be prepared to get help if it does. If you give them a sense of fear about it, they might choose to hide an arising issue from you. Likewise if you constantly ask about potential issues or ask leading questions about their activity, it might escalate an issue further than necessary creating unnecessary anxiety.

The government has now released guidance which is a comprehensive list of links. You might like to use these sites for reference instead of trying to read all of the information in them:

- [Thinkuknow](#) (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- [Internet matters](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [Parent info](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [LGfL](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [Net-aware](#) (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC)
- [Let's Talk About It](#) (support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) (tips, advice, guides)

Primary School Places- Reception Class places have been released

The 'primary National Offer Day' went ahead as expected on 16 April 2020. Parents should have received offers of primary school places for September 2020 admissions on 16 April 2020. Please ensure to read the guidance and any next steps you might need to take. If you think you should have received something but haven't please contact the local authority.

Meal vouchers for those eligible for Free School Meals (ie. if you receive Income Support)

Children eligible for Free School Meals will continue to receive food vouchers from us. We will remain in continued contact with those families about this until we reopen. If you have recently obtained Free School Meal status please contact us.

Well Being in isolation

As expected well being is now emerging as a core issue due to isolation. Needless to say, we will have a close focus on the childrens' well being when we finally return to school but for now here is further government advice and links to help at home:

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Social connections, alongside exercise, sleep, diet and routine, are important protective factors for mental health. Materials to promote and support mental wellbeing are included in the list of [online resources](#) we have published to help children to learn at home. Public Health England's [Rise Above](#) platform supports young people.

Resources to promote and support children and young people's mental wellbeing include:

- [MindEd educational resources for adults about children and young people's mental health](#), which is relevant for parents and carers as well as volunteers, teachers, and other professionals working with children
- the [Every Mind Matters](#) platform which supports looking after your own and other's mental health
- [guidance on looking after wellbeing and mental health](#) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- [guidance on supporting children's wellbeing and mental health](#)

Contact

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3/4/20 update

Today would have been the last day of the Spring Term. Children would have been excited but very tired as we counted down the hours to the Easter break, said our goodbyes and looked forward to reviving ourselves with some time away from school. We are all as disappointed as you that our normal activities are not transpiring.

Frequency of this update

The update frequency is currently low because although we continue to get information from many sources, it is recycled information with nothing new for schools. I will continue to inform you directly when new information is available. I expect the frequency of updates to increase again as the country moves towards the next phase in controlling the virus.

Easter holidays

Online teaching will cease for the Easter Holidays. Why?

- normal breaks should be observed in some form, for everyone's mental health
- teachers need time to plan and resource for next term, whether this will be online or onsite (when we eventually reopen)
- children will need downtime in which they do not feel obliged to continue daily learning- they may be mentally fatigued by learning everyday, even when not at school.

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We will continue to be open only for the few critical workers' children on the register whose parents cannot safely keep them at home without supervision. It remains clear that keeping your child at home is the safest thing you can do for your child (and our staff). We will be completely closed during bank holidays and weekends. Please always monitor the website since we might still be forced to close at any time due to lack of staff. To stem the spread of the outbreak and for the health of your child, we will continue to check with you that there is no possible way for them to stay home and that your work away from home is absolutely essential to the outbreak.

After Easter

People will start to turn their thoughts to getting back to work and school reopening. We can't yet foresee the direction and we continue to be directed by the government which is currently taking the approach of reviewing every 3 weeks. However, we do anticipate their considerations being:

- a rebound effect from the virus if schools are reopened too early

countered by

- the longer term fatigue with the lockdown, experienced by a nation which stops seeing the benefit of it.

Therefore we are planning for all eventualities, including:

- **online learning throughout the next term** (with more guidance on how to carry out online work while catering for those who do not have good online access via a proportion of the work involving suggestions that can be responded to on paper by the children (and parents) e.g. story mapping, poster, maths challenge, art, practical science)
- **being guided to reopen fully at some point during next term** (with special provision and school activities to ensure children can suitably reintegrate and make the most of the end of the academic year)
- **being guided to a partial or phased reopening** (with separate timetabling in order to control the vast complications of social distancing, staff timetabling and the health of the vulnerable)

In planning for every possible outcome, we have the understanding that none of them are more or less likely.

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Safeguarding of children continues to be a key driver

It is a stark fact that some will find this period of isolation more difficult than others. It is important to restate that the school continues to use our normal safeguarding methods but, due to home schooling, some methods have changed as repeated below:

- If you are concerned that there is a safeguarding issue emerging involving a child you must refer this directly to external services. Then share your concerns with the school so we are aware of them but be clear that we cannot act on third party information in these lockdown circumstances- we cannot reliably recount an incident to the appropriate body on your behalf, it must come from you: Contact 999 in an emergency or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if you have urgent concerns for a child, or suspect that a child has been abused in any way, please call immediately on 0300 500 80 80 (if you are a member of the public).

Trips and Residentials that have been cancelled

We hope that we will return before the end of the academic year but it is now evident that we will be restarting this marathon with an altered route. There is a receding likelihood that summer term school events can be reorganised successfully and safely in this ever shortening period. It is disappointing for some parents and many children but please be mindful that every decision we have to make (and will be making in the near future) is very carefully considered. We spend a lot of time discussing the implications that you can see and many that you don't. As ever, decisions polarise distinct groups in terms of parent response: for example, for every parent who is disappointed that a residential is cancelled, there is another who is equally pleased at the decision for safety or financial reasons. To be blunt, we can't win in this situation, so we will continue, with wide professional collaboration, to make the best possible decisions.

To ensure you understand this tenuous position here is part of the reasoning concerning cancelling Year 6 residential. Some (but not all the factors):

- the disappointment experienced by the children
- not all parents feeling comfortable with their children going on residential even if we are fully open by that time
- not all parents now being able to pay and therefore the trip being underfunded
- not enough staff being available
- rebound of the virus and unavoidable close proximity of all the children while away
- coach/transport issues
- the venue itself not being prepared to restart visits
- processing delayed for normal paperwork timings

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- mental readiness of children- usually helped by the teacher preparing the class group in the weeks before
- generally having to revise school practices when we return, not merely being able to pick up where we left off.

For individual/day trips- we are bound by such cancellation policies as those of coach companies, etc. We will refund to you anything that has been refunded to us.

In more general terms of making decisions about the longer term future: it will appear completely excessive for me to say but it has to be noted (to stem the more wild rumours) that we do not have any more information about lockdown than the rest of the country! We are merely trying to plan for the longer term future as prudently as possible while not crystal ball gazing.

Those on Free School Meals

For those families with children on the FSM register, we have now been given access to a government scheme which will be easier for us to co-ordinate than the vouchers we have been allocating personally to families. The school will contact each relevant family directly.

Further contact

I will update you as soon as we have more information (regardless of the school holiday period). If there is no update, there is no new relevant information. The school office is now having to run entirely virtually, please email office.2609@ladygrove-park.oxon.sch.uk with any queries or updates to personal circumstances.

27/3/20 update

Congratulations for making it through the first week of learning at home. It has certainly put all of us on a new learning curve. Now is a time to reflect on week one and look ahead to week two. There are some further suggestions in section 1 (as ever, I understand that these updates go to a wide and diverse audience so please pick and choose from any, all or none of them depending on your situation).

Section 1: For those at home

We now know for certain that this is a marathon, not a sprint

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Be pleased. The most important way to contribute to the nations plight is to stay at home, by doing this you are doing your bit. Looking ahead, we anticipate that for some it might feel like it is going on too long but we have to hang in there to ensure the outbreak remains controlled.

So what about the learning? The fundamental pattern of our lives has changed. This isn't strictly called home schooling so don't try to copy those comedy films in which a parent sets up a blackboard and desk in their garage! We know that keeping a routine is good for all but in the long term (especially in the stricter confines of home) it remains important to keep it a loose routine. Do not attempt to replicate a school day (unless you and the children are enjoying doing so). The change to our activity levels means that the routine has to be adjusted to continue to be effective. Think about how the pattern of the day has changed due to the style of activities then map out how to ensure less stress and better focus times. *Maintain the parent role* (helping/supporting with learning), don't blur this by attempting to be a teacher also (unless, again, the role play is fun for you and your child).

Fostering routines, not just applying them

Think about activities in terms of focus levels. There is an old algorithm which tells us the length of time a child is able to focus is linked to their numerical age. Don't stick rigidly to this! Every child is different- watch your child and see how long they can focus for- they'll show you by beginning to fidget or start avoidance tactics. Persevere a little (to foster resilience) then stop and do something else.

Breaks

Try to make them explicit not haphazard. This includes the weekend- don't blur the learning tasks in to Saturday or Sunday otherwise everyday will become the same and a treadmill effect will take over. Teachers will stop providing online resources and contact on weekends but also during the Easter holidays. This allows for all participants to have a break because we do not know how long these systems will need to be continued. As usual teachers will use some of their holiday time to prepare for next term and online content/contact will restart on Monday 20th April.

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Family time and Protecting Mental Health

We know the benefits of having group family time but confinement gives this a different twist. Everyone will need to take reflective time for themselves, not necessarily in a separate room but at list doing separate things. So attempt to nurture an approach to some independent activities for your child. The aim is for them to enjoy doing a task in greater depth rather than getting the enjoyment from rushing through and finishing lots of them (this is the premise of 'mastery learning').

The changing uses of technology (it's a positive but boundaries should still be respected)

Our society has had a difficult relationship with technology but this might be changing. Technology is now helping us to remain social and this is an important factor for children. Think about the ways in which your child (and you) communicate with your friends- consider expanding out from just texting. Voice and video are available through many different platforms but remember to always foster respect online and safeguarding against inappropriacy. Also note that Google Classroom is not the place for this (see below). If allowing video conferencing the most effective rule would be that your child can only do so in a shared space with you present, or at least with their door open and you near. Set the ground rules and agree them before starting. Risk assess what you do if it goes wrong- again good to agree in advance. If it does go wrong, limit the privilege until better respect is demonstrated. Bear in mind that if you choose to take away the device altogether at this time, you are taking away possibly helpful social contact, so be prudent with the length of the sanction. As I said, we still have a difficult relationship with technology and the responsibility is on the user to get it right.

Google Classroom

We are all learning how to cope with the online tools and, as such, we are creating new rules as we go. The first and overarching rule is:

Google Classroom is only to be used for learning activities as directed by the teacher. It is not to be used socially. Do not use the stream for general chat and do not post personal

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information. This includes such actions as posting open requests for social video conferencing.

Operational matters between home and school

- Please note that there is now no benefit in sharing information on infection at home with school if you are self isolating anyway. Follow the NHS guidelines and get the appropriate medical support.
- Please remember teachers have a larger role than just orchestrating the online resources. To protect their time, we are asking them not to engage in 1:1 email contact with parents unless under special circumstances.
- Remember that there are resources constantly being added to the school website curriculum pages which are additional to the content you are getting from Google Classrooms.
- Get your child to engage with Google Classroom as much as possible but be aware that we are asking teachers not to chase those pupils who are not engaging fully with Google Classrooms (at this stage) because we recognise the stresses and functions of each family in lockdown will be different.
 - If you are concerned that there is a safeguarding issue emerging involving a child you must refer this directly to external services (as below). Then share your concerns with the school so we are aware of them but be clear that we cannot act on third party information in these lockdown circumstances- we cannot reliably recount an incident to the appropriate body on your behalf, it must come from you: Contact 999 in an emergency or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if you have urgent concerns for a child, or suspect that a child has been abused in any way, please call immediately on 0300 500 80 80 (if you are a member of the public).

Section 2: For those at school

Again, thank you for keeping your child at home, in the safer environment, wherever possible.

Operational matters at school

- Public messages from the government indicate that tougher measures might be on the way.
- The school is currently still closed to all except the very few essential and critical worker Ladygrove pupils whose parents cannot safely keep them at home without supervision. It is clear that keeping your child at home is the safest thing you can do for your child (and our staff). For those attending school, please be mindful that we are on reduced

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provision, we are not following any curriculum. It is likely that this system will be available in the Easter holiday weeks for those currently on our critical worker offer. This will be confirmed during next week. Note that we will be closed completely during Bank Holidays and weekends. And always monitor the website since we might still be forced to close at any time due to lack of staff.

- To stem the spread of the outbreak and for the health of your child, we will continue to check with you that there is no possible way for them to stay home and that your work away from home is absolutely essential to the outbreak.

24/3/20 update

Section 1: Messages for all

Section 2: For everyone at home

Section 3: For critical key workers with pupils at school

Section 1: Messages for all

Your understanding (as a community) of the operational issues we are facing has been exceptional. This has enabled us to better navigate the difficulty of receiving strong statements from government while having little in-depth guidance on implementation.

Somewhat understandably, due to the speed of this crisis, official guidance for schools often raises more questions than answers. Furthermore, there is a lot of prediction and supposition about what schools need to do in the future such as, accepting pupils from local closed schools and opening during Easter. I will only share details with you when full and established guidance becomes available. With the situation changing so quickly it would be foolhardy to make a decision on future plans too early and risk these plans changing thereby confusing everyone. In our current situation everyday is a lifetime.

Section 2: For everyone at home

More suggestions for you (based on what we usually do at school):

Framing timings

We spend a lot of time explaining to the children what they are **about to do** and **how long they have** to do it. This helps them to compartmentalise the demand of the activity- remember when an exam invigilator said to you "You have ten minutes left". Therefore, instead of being immediate (eg: "Right stop that and now do this") frame the timings: 'In 10 minutes we'll start on...', "OK, 1 minute left and let's do..."

Social Stories

Not completely relevant for home schooling but a good technique of which to be aware: If you think your child will be anxious about something coming up in the future (like another

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day of home schooling!) talk with them, in advance, through the steps **towards it happening** and then **what it will look like** when it is happening. We do this on the run up to residential trips for those with anxiety about the unknown. My analogy for this is: you are on the way to a party but you know none of your existing friends will be there. You are certain you will enjoy it but it still makes you anxious before you get in there.

Presenting new material using small steps

Since the teachers are now having to drop whole pieces of work online in one go they aren't able to do the usual 'scaffolding'- the best bit of teaching! It's necessary then for the children to pick up **a new concept a little piece at a time**. The concept needs to be broken down in to the smallest pieces you can think of and **then built up slowly**. This idea also incorporates 'modelling'- in it's basic form that is when the teacher **approaches the concept first while the pupil watches how they do it**. But don't fret about trying to do all this- teachers are trying to avoid online work which needs this sort of teaching application.

Section 3: For critical key workers with pupils at school

Thank you for pulling together arrangements for your child to stay home where possible. Due to the lower numbers today we have been able to create some semblance of social distancing for the pupils. We are also able to cope better as we continue to rota staff around social distancing, since it is important we give them the choice to think of their own safety too.

We are painfully aware that everyone has to deal with their own reality in this crisis- in terms of health and finances everyone has their own challenge. We will continue to support with emergency childcare but we will always put the health of the children foremost by encouraging as many of them to stay home as possible.

23/3/20 update PM

Section 1: Messages for all

Section 2: For critical key workers with pupils at school

Section 3: For everyone at home

Section 1: Messages for all

It is hugely appreciated that parents have largely followed our guidance. I appreciate that there is a lot of information to take in from us but it is vital that you read the information targeted to you, this is why I am now attempting to put these updates in to relevant sections. Reading these helps us by alleviating the pressure of dealing with individual queries that we've already answered in these updates. We will always be as available as possible to clarify any guidance (bearing in mind that, with fast moving change, sometimes we don't know ourselves).

Current school status:

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Front Office: large impact due to most team requiring to socially distance- at least one person will attempt to be available 8-9am and more if possible.

The majority of teachers and TAs are now isolating with family or distancing as they follow the latest guidance to stay safe at home.

Section 2: For critical key workers with pupils at school

Thank you for bearing with us as we carefully check if emergency childcare is the right choice in each family situation. This morning went better than we expected due to your patience, but there are still issues to iron out. The trajectory of this virus certainly points towards it becoming ever more serious and we should anticipate the possibilities in the coming days:

1. Status quo: continued full closure with very few of the critical staff pupils attending. "If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading."
2. The government chooses to take a stricter lockdown line to encourage the country to take this more seriously- if they do this might mean that our criteria for opening changes.
3. We continue to lose staff members to isolation and distancing and enter a critical phase which leads to our own complete shutdown.

Section 3: For everyone at home

More suggestions to help you get through...

Routine

Day 1 at home. Have you managed to stick to a loose **routine**? Children will react best to consistency- sticking to **bedtime routines** especially helps with ongoing attitude. Building in breaks or changes to any activity helps compartmentise the day.

Rules

Make use of our school rules if you think they will help. Remember, you can use these **preemptively** eg. Are you keeping yourself safe by standing on that chair? They can also be used **positively** eg. You've really demonstrated the green rule by completing that task. Finally, the 'Be School Ready' rule could be converted to a bedtime routine rule.

Ladygrove Standard
Be safe and help others
Show respect and tolerance
Listen and follow instructions

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Be responsible for possessions
Show good manners
Be school ready
Have a Positive Mental Attitude

Awards

Give a **'virtual' Headteacher's Sticker** if your child has really impressed you (ie. Done even more than you expected). Don't give too many though or they will be devalued.



Home Emergency

It might seem strange but it's prudent to consider discussing with your child in advance **what to do in an emergency at home**- so everyone is clear on their roles and expectations- eg. who to phone, where to move to or where to stay put, what the fire alarm sound like, etc.

Talking about current events

Think about how your child is being **exposed to information** about the virus. If they are listening to you sharing stories with other adults or if they have unlimited access to social media/coverage, they will be assimilating more than you expect and may not show you their true level of personal concern about it. Likewise, consider not completely hiding your child from the situation- they will already be confused by the lack of normality.

Nurture this conversation without sensationalism or panic, keep to the basic facts, don't dwell too long, know that they look to you to feel safe.

23/3/20 update AM

Section 1: Message for all

School remains closed.

As of today we are in uncharted territory.

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In the days before closure it became apparent that quite a few families do not read these updates. Please could you alert and share these updates widely- this will help with the volume of calls relating to issues already addressed in the updates.

Emergency Home School Agreement:

1. All parents should expect that things will not initially go smoothly; bear with us.
2. Teachers are now working as carers to ensure the correct people can continue to do jobs specifically to combat the virus directly, issues created through it and its spread.
3. Online work officially starts today between teachers and the pupils in their class through Google Classrooms. However, note that teachers are now dividing their time between working at school and online, therefore they may be offline on some days. Please do not expect your child's teacher to attempt to work online while also acting as child care at school.
4. School staff continue to be equally affected by the current situation, we still have up to 50% of school staff either self isolating or social distancing.
5. School leadership activity now consists of monitoring interactions online, handling the rota of onsite provision (made more fluid by staff coming in to and off of isolation) and strategic planning for reopening.
6. The government are considering ever tougher measures to help people abide by the need for social distancing. Here we 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."**

Section 2: Messages for those using emergency childcare

We are proud to be able to help those who are addressing the critical issues around the virus spread by offering this limited childcare. Nevertheless, you make the final decision about using our childcare ensuring you are informed by the government's latest, very strong recommendation, to abide by social distance. Schools have been instructed to stay open to take groups of critical key worker and vulnerable pupils for emergency childcare but social distancing cannot be enacted under these arrangements- if you are not happy with this, make different arrangements. Your choice must be guided by the expectation we have of this issue when admitting your child.

If your child is on the register, please **think before they enter school** each day:

1. Is this **childcare unavoidable** and is it **specifically** for my work **to support those who need help or to stop the virus spread**?
2. Do I have **contact with others who are elderly or vulnerable** and sending my child to school could lead to further spread?

Do not enter if your child or anyone in your household is **showing symptoms**. Contact us to give us this update.

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Note that it remains possible that the school could close entirely, due to severe lack of staff. Complete closure will be communicated via the app and website as soon as the decision is made.

What to expect of 'reduced provision'

1. Staff will monitor safety and intervene on any inappropriate behaviour
2. Staff will provide a variety of activities but these will not necessarily have educational value.
3. Playtime and lunchtime will be monitored for appropriate play and eating.
4. It is highly likely that there will be a very wide mix of age ranges in groups.
5. School rules apply.
6. Uniform is not necessary.

Section 3: Messages for parents with children at home

We will have more for you in this section when onsite organisation has settled.

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

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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.

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

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- 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.)

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

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- 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.

School Closure Updates re Covid19

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.

School Closure Updates re Covid19

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.