

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

## School Update

Dear parents/carers,

### Re: Coronavirus update – school closure to most pupils from Monday

#### Clarification of which children should continue to attend school from Monday onwards

Good morning – I hope everyone remains fit and well and you aren't getting too confused and anxious about the ongoing situation regarding which children can continue to attend school.

I will outline school's current position, based on the government advice concerning key workers which they sent out this morning.

The link to the government's advice for parents/carers is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Within that document is a link to the list of Critical (or Key) Workers, but to make it easier for you to find, just click here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Unfortunately, I'm sure you will agree that 90% of the working population probably falls into one or other of these key worker categories! This really isn't very useful in helping us to decide which children we need to provide childcare for from Monday.

So, school's position today is guided by the following principles:

1. I have to try to limit the numbers of children attending school to as close to 10% of the school population as possible (around 50 children). Otherwise, the health benefit of closing schools (which is why the government took the decision to do so) is compromised.
2. The government has asked all parents to keep their children at home (even if you are included as a key worker) where possible – 'schools are only open for those children who absolutely need to attend.' If you have older children/young adults or wider family members (under 70's and those without any serious underlying medical conditions only!) who can supervise children at home, they should.
3. 'Priority will be given to those parents who are critical to the COVID-19 response'. Many key workers on the list may not be critical to the COVID-19 response – your employers need to take a responsible lead on this.
4. If you are a part-time (critical/key) worker, you will only be able to send your child to school on the days you work.
5. 'If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be. Therefore, if you or your partner are working from home, then your child should not come to school.'
6. We will have to prioritise cases – **to begin with** it is likely that only families where: both parents are key/critical workers (or single parent families where the parent is a key/critical worker) **and** where you have no other safe childcare options available **and** where

your employer has confirmed that you are critical to the COVID-19 response **and** you must be in work, will be offered places in school next week.

We are asking all key workers among our parents/carers to contact school, to provide us with the information we need in order to make this incredibly difficult decision.

First, all NHS, fire and rescue services, social and care-home workers, teachers and nursery staff. Please contact school this morning if possible (or as soon as you can).

**Next, I would like to ask all other parents/carers who believe (having checked the advice above) that they are included in the key/critical worker group and they have no other childcare options to contact school this afternoon.**

Note: we cannot confirm whether your child will have a place in school during this phone call. We will need to hear from all the parents/carers who fall into this category and can only allocate the limited places left on the basis of highest need.

Do not assume that if you are included on the key/critical worker list, your child can attend school. Only those families who we contact and confirm a place will be able to attend on Monday. Please be aware that this may have implications for your ability to work next week.

Some families have already been contacted to confirm their children will be continuing in school. We will continue to do this throughout the rest of today – I anticipate having to continue this process well into tonight and most likely, into Monday as well.

Lastly, note that the situation is flexible – we will have to review offers of places as the situation changes in the coming weeks.

I'm really sorry that we won't be able to please everybody. Be assured that we will consider everybody's case as fairly as we possibly can and bear with us at this exceptionally challenging time.

Keep in touch via the 'Latest News' section of the website – I will be posting more throughout the day.

Look after yourselves,

Mr K Buck

Headteacher