

Coronavirus Update

Dear Parent/Carers,

Following the Government's announcement at ten past midnight today - we now have some clarity (although I use the word sparingly) around the next steps in our battle against COVID-19.

*As previously shared, schools have been directed to close **from Monday 23rd March 2020 except for children of Key Workers, who have NO OTHER OPTIONS OPEN TO THEM and Vulnerable children.***

We have already contacted the parents of our vulnerable children and now we address those parents categorised as **Key Workers**. As it stands these workers are defined as:

Health & Social Care

Nurses, doctors, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers and pharmacists.

Education & Childcare

Nursery and teaching staff.

Key public services

Essential running of the justice system, management of the deceased, journalists and broadcasters.

Local & National Government

Only includes administrative occupations essential to the direct response of COVID-19.

Food & necessary goods

Food production, distribution, sale and delivery.

Public safety & National security

Police, armed forces, prison and border security staff, fire and ambulance.

Transport

Personnel responsible for keeping air, water, road and rail freight operating.

Utilities, communication & financial services

Essential services such as banks and building societies. Staff who work in the gas, oil, electric or water sectors and contribute to 999 and 111 critical services.

Despite this somewhat broad sector, it is important to remember the following **Government guidance**:

"Although many parents may work in these sectors - "EVERY CHILD WHO CAN BE CARED FOR AT HOME SHOULD BE."

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The Government are also asking parents to "keep their children at home WHEREVER POSSIBLE and have asked schools to remain open only for those children who ABSOLUTELY NEED TO ATTEND."

"Schools are being asked to provide care for a limited number of children, who cannot be safely cared for at home."

Parents are also asked to follow these key principles:

"If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be."

"Parents should ensure that children are not mixing socially - they should observe the same social distancing principles as adults."

This is a significant and necessary increase in cautionary strategy. Your support as parents and carers is vital in our collective efforts to stop the spread of this infection. We therefore ask, that if you are a **Key Worker**, and are **absolutely unable to safely keep your child at home**, you contact the school **immediately**, providing proof of your contract of employment, in order for us to make necessary arrangements for your child.

I promised yesterday that I would explain more about our provision for Home Learning and to that end we have utilised a Learning Platform called 'Google Classroom'. This can be accessed through any device, mobile or otherwise, and allows teaching staff to post work assignments, which can be completed and returned to the teacher electronically. All children have been given a log-in for this facility, (Year 1 to Year 6 only, as Reception children will continue to use Tapestry). A 'crib-sheet' containing advice on how to access this platform will be available on the school website. Those children who have been absent, will be sent a log-in via email within the next few days. Please be patient with this new school system. It is brand new for all of us and has been designed under emergency circumstances. If you have any difficulties with this, please email the school office, who will direct your enquiry to the relevant member of staff.

In the interest of social distancing, please restrict all correspondence with the school to either phone or email as from Monday 23rd March 2020.

In addition to this facility, we will also activate a new section of our website, signposting many on-line learning activities **from Monday 23rd March**. Simply use and follow the 'Home-Learning' icon from our Homepage to access these, for your child's particular year group. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact the school as soon as possible, for alternative arrangements to be made. We remain committed to providing as much of a continued service as possible, but please note, that in the current and ever changing landscape, all things are subject to change. I will of course endeavour to keep you updated.

As ever, thank you for your continued support - stay well!