

20 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Department of Education - Closure of schools: information for parents and carers.

Thank you so much for your messages of support during this challenging time, and your understanding that we are working hard to ensure school closure information and Home Learning guidance is shared effectively. I hope you take the view we are doing this in a calm and measured way, and I appreciate how patient parents have been waiting for updates as we in turn await government guidance. Keeping the questions online to a minimum over the last couple of days has ensured our capacity has been focussed on keeping the school open fully, preparing guidance and of course organising resources for Google Classroom ready for Monday. I am so grateful to be working in such a supportive local community.

In the early hours the Department for Education published some guidance for parents and carers answering key questions that everyone has been asking. We have sent a text to parents for those who are 'critical workers' to complete.

From Monday we will not be running the school as normal, there will be no national curriculum offer, and we anticipate only a handful of children from critical workers. Our focus is on Home Learning via online Google Classroom. We will organise a series of activities and access to ICT to access Google Classroom. The government message is clear, the whole point of school closure is for social distancing. Every child who can be safely cared for at school should be. The full guidance from the DfE is here: www.normanby.outwood.com/letters-to-parents

Closure of schools and other educational settings

School are closed from Monday 23 March to the majority of schools due to the coronavirus outbreak until further notice.

Schools and other educational settings have been asked to remain open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children where they can, but understands some may be unable to do so due to severe staff shortages. The department for education (DfE) is working with local authorities to find alternative settings where needed, alongside possible transport solutions.

Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, and many parents working in critical sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. The above is an offer, and there is no requirement for critical workers to send children to school.

Critical workers

Children with at least one parent or carer who is a government identified critical worker can send their child to school, only if required. Critical workers include:

Health and social care: includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers and front line volunteers and support/specialist staff maintaining the health and social care sector and supply chain, including medicine and medical/personal protective equipment.

Education and child care: includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and specialist education professionals who must remain active during COVID-19 response

Key public services: includes essential workers running the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

Local and national government: includes only those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods: includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery, and essential provision of other linked key goods such as hygienic and veterinary medicines.

Public safety and national security: includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel essential to delivering of key defence and national security outputs, fire and rescue service employees and support staff, National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles.

Transport: includes those keeping air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services: includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water/sewerage sectors, IT and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies, key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including network operations, field engineering, call-centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services /delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable includes children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, and children with a social worker such as children in need, those with a child protection plan and those looked after by the local authority. The DfE is working with schools and authorities to help identify those children that need the most support at this time, and understands schools will also want to support other children who are vulnerable where they are able to do so. Social workers will work with parents to assess the best options.

Exams

GCSEs will not go ahead in this summer, but the DfE is working with the education sector and Ofqual to ensure young people get the qualifications they need. Further details will follow.

Free school meals

Schools will be given the flexibility to provide meals or vouchers to children eligible for free school meals. The DfE is putting in place a national voucher scheme as soon as possible.

Broadband/mobiles

Any problems with broadband and mobile networks are being addressed quickly at a national level.

Thank you for your continued understanding and support, it is greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Wappat
Principal