



20th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Next week, we will be closed to the majority of children until further notice.

If children can stay at home, they should, to prevent the virus spreading.

Government guidance is that school must only be open for those children who **absolutely need to attend**.

The government believe that this will only be a **small number** of children in each school. This will allow the school to remain open as a safe place for these children to attend. The fewer the children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

We will, therefore, continue to provide care for a very 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 are currently planning School will be open from **Tuesday 24th March** onward for this reduced provision. This will enable us to work with the relevant families and plan a safe staffing structure and environment accordingly. Where possible we will continue to look after children throughout the Easter holidays.

If you think you may fall into the **critical worker categories**, you will need to provide evidence of this. To provide this you may need to seek confirmation from your employer that your specific role is necessary for the continuation of an essential public service. You will need to bring this evidence to school on Monday by 12 noon (or email the school office) for us to be able to confirm whether your child can attend. If you work shifts, you should keep your child at home with you when you are not at work and only send them to school when you are not able to care for them at home. **Many parents working in these critical sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home.**

If your child is **vulnerable** (supported by social care, those with welfare needs) we will be in touch with you personally over the coming days.

Children with EHC plans may be provided for, **if they cannot be safely cared for at home**. Any medical conditions that require them to be at home will override their EHC plan. This will be considered on a case by case basis. For some they will be safer in school. For others they will be safer at home. We will be in touch with parents/carers personally to discuss this.

If we are able to offer your child provision, we will then be in touch to ask when you would like your child to attend. The Coronavirus crisis means that schools are currently operating on significantly reduced staffing numbers. For this reason, we will prioritise placements on a case by case basis and regularly review whether the school is able to continue operating as a safe environment for children and staff.

Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

This is an offer to parents and carers and there is no requirement for parents and carers to send their children to school if they do not need or wish to do so.

Yours sincerely
Karen Austin
Head of School