



20 March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

**Re: School remaining open for those students whose parents or carers are key workers – URGENT RESPONSE TO THIS EMAIL REQUESTED.**

I am sure you will have been following the Government briefings on school closures, as we have, and attempting to fathom what they mean for you and your children. The Government has taken the decision that schools will be closed for most children with the exceptions being, children whose parents are **critical workers** and children who are **vulnerable**. This means that, for the majority of students, we will now be asking them to continue to study at home. In the first instance, please can all students follow the guidance that I sent out in a **Parentmail message on Monday 16th March**. We will update everyone on any changes to this approach should schools remain closed after Easter.

The challenge that we currently face is trying to ascertain which students would be entitled to come into school after Friday so that we can effectively plan provision for those who would like to attend. The provision in school, in the first instance, will be supervised and supported self-study. From an ethical point of view, it is appropriate that the education that we provide these students is the same as that received by students who are now not allowed to come to school. We are working with the local authority to try to understand how school transport will work, and with the Government and our school's caterers to understand how school meals will work. In these highly exceptional circumstances, please be understanding that we do not yet have all of the information and answers that we need.

To help us to obtain the necessary information, we now need to ask all parents and carers to let us know the answers to a series of important questions to help us to plan for next week:

- Is one of your child's parents/carers a key worker?
- What is the name and address of that key worker's employer?
- Do key workers have access to alternative appropriate childcare during closure, for example the other parent?
- Whether you would like your child to continue attending school after Friday 20th March?
- Whether you would need the local authority to provide transport for your child so that they can attend school?
- If yes, the location from which they are normally picked up and dropped off.
- Whether or not your child is currently 'staying at home' because a member of their household has some symptoms of the coronavirus?
- If yes, when it would be expected that this child could and would return to school?

Overnight, the Government has provided us with this definition of 'critical workers' which can be seen [here](#). The guidance prioritises that students should still be kept at home, if at all possible, so if one parent or carer is a 'critical worker' and the other isn't, please do consider carefully whether you need to still send your child to school; you are entitled to but have been encouraged to avoid this option if you can. Please use the Government's guidance to establish whether you are a critical worker. If necessary, as suggested in the guidance, contact your employer to discuss whether your role is critical.

Please remember that we are providing emergency childcare as part of the Government's wider measures to limit the spread of Covid 19. To be clear, this is not a financial support measure to enable some people to work. This is a public health emergency measure to ensure those who are needed by all of us can get to work without worrying about their children. The Government has also been clear

**“...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.”**

In order for the school to function safely on a limited basis, I cannot stress the importance of the word 'need' enough. If we are going to sustain emergency childcare provision at school for those who are genuinely key workers, then I must ask all of you to consider carefully your 'need' and the greater social responsibilities that we all have at this time.

To enable us to collect this information easily, please can you click on the link [here](#) and fill out the survey, **whether you think someone in your house will qualify as a critical worker or not**. We will need to contact anyone that doesn't fill in the survey, so you will be saving valuable administrative time for staff later today by completing the survey. We would never ordinarily send out a message and expect people to prioritise an immediate response but, in these exceptional circumstances, we would be hugely grateful if you were able to respond straight away and no later than 12.00pm. As you know, we close this afternoon and need some time after your responses to plan logistics and staffing levels for next week.

Thanks again for your support, patience and understanding.

Yours sincerely



James Barringer

**Deputy Headteacher**