

To: Parent/Carers

Shelley Davies  
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19 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

**COVID 19 (Coronavirus) - school closures from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and providing care for key workers and those who are vulnerable**

As you will all be aware, yesterday, the government has announced that schools, early years settings and nurseries, 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges and independent schools will be closed to the majority of children from the end of the school day on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March.

I realise this is distressing news for you and our entire school community and will leave many anxious, but I want to reassure everyone that we will support you and your child(ren) as much as we can. I want to thank you all in advance for your undoubted support during these challenging times and I feel very confident that together we can all work tirelessly to put everything in place to support our most vulnerable pupils.

There is an expectation that care and education will be provided for three key categories of children, over the next two weeks and possibly during the Easter holidays, from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.

These key categories of children include:

1. Children who have a social worker i.e. Looked After Children, children on Child Protection plans and Child In Need Plans.
2. Children who have Education, Health and Care Plans, EHCPs. This includes all pupils in ELPs, Special Schools as well as those in mainstream schools and settings.
3. Children of 'key workers'. We are awaiting clarification of the exact definition, but it is expected to include children of NHS workers (Doctors, Nurses, and Support Staff of Hospitals), police, teachers, social care workers, social workers, supermarket workers, supply chain drivers and personnel as well as workers in Critical Economy areas such as Electricity & gas. The Government will release a full list later today and this should be widely reported in the news.

The care will most likely be in your child's own school but in some cases this may be in another local school. Your child's school should inform you of this as soon as arrangements have been made.

We have good records of the numbers of children who fall into the first two categories and we are working closely with schools to make the provision required. If you feel that your child falls into category one or two above and the school might be unaware of this, then please contact the school to make sure that they are included.

We have less information on which parents are key workers. If you feel that you, as a parent are a key worker by the definition above or by subsequent definitions released to the press you will need to let your school know if you haven't already done so. Most schools have developed a way of collecting this information, so please follow any requests to provide such data made by the school.

It is important to minimise the number of students in school in order to slow transmission of the virus. If you are a key worker and you are happy for your child to be at home, either because there will be someone to look after them, or they are old enough to stay at home alone, please consider this and let the school know so that they can offer places where childcare is unavailable.

### **Additional information**

- Exams – GCSEs and A Levels and SATs will not take place. We appreciate that this will be of a huge concern to pupils in years 6, 11 and 13. I would urge them not to over-worry about this (as difficult as it may seem) as the Government have promised that no students will be disadvantaged due to this decision.

### **Nest steps and actions:**

- We will continue to provide SEN transport for those eligible where possible, given staffing considerations.
- We are working on providing a reduced meals service in schools or groups of schools for those children staying in school. In addition to this, we are planning how we might provide food for those eligible for free school meals who are not in school. This might be by pupils being asked to collect the food from outside the school at a pre-arranged time, or by issuing of supermarket vouchers. Again, schools will provide information as to how this will work in their individual circumstances.
- There will be no external exams to focus on, but the message from yesterday is that schools will be expected to continue to provide home learning and teaching for pupils who are not in school. Most schools will have well established procedures to set work remotely. Please, however, use today and tomorrow to ensure that your child is able to log-in at home to any remote systems that the school will tell you about.
- We appreciate that parents and carers will be anxious as to whether they are 'key workers' and whether they might lose their job if they cannot work because they don't have child care. The Government is expected to share this information today. As soon as it has been received schools have been asked to put this information on their website.
- Pupils will be anxious that they may/may not have to keep going to school when their peers do not/ they will be worried about exams and places at college and

university. We have compiled a guidance for all pupils on keeping themselves safe and we will distribute this as soon as possible.

- Special schools are a focus of our work at present. Mainsream schools have offered support to their special school colleagues in any way they can.

This is a time when we will all need to work together to ensure that our families and children are well supported and cared for. I'm sure that if we all pull together we can get through this outbreak safely and with as minimum disruption as possible in the circumstances.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Shelley Davies', written in a light grey or blue ink.

**Shelley Davies**  
**Interim Director of Education and Youth Engagement**