



St. Mary's
Pre-School

"What we nurture today, flourishes tomorrow"

St. Mary's C of E School

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Headteacher: Mr T Milne

5th January 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I hope you all enjoyed the Christmas holidays and that you are all keeping well.

Following the government's announcement last night, I am writing to confirm that our school and pre-school will be closed to most pupils for at least the next few weeks.

As advised by the government, we will do all that we can to stay open for the children of critical workers (e.g. NHS staff, police, others in frontline services) and children with certain needs.

The government has also advised the following: -

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then the school will remain open for them.
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.

With cases climbing rapidly, we are tasked with providing care for children whose parents are required to continue working and are working in vital areas, whilst also being respectful of the urgent need for a national lockdown. At all times, your child's welfare is our priority. In line with this, prior to requesting a place at school, we urge you to consider whether alternative arrangements can be made for the care of your child and whether it is in their best interests to attend.

Important information regarding critical worker and vulnerable child provision:

- The school day will operate from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm.
- There will not be any breakfast or after school clubs.
- Critical worker places can only be offered for the days that you are working; working patterns will be verified with your employer.
- Whilst the school kitchen will remain closed, your child will be able to order a packed lunch from our catering contractors. This is free for children in Key Stage 1, and £2.25 for all other children. Please provide a packed lunch this week whilst these arrangements are put into place.

VULNERABLE CHILDREN

*Should your child be classed as vulnerable and you require that they continue to attend school, **please respond with the information requested below by 1pm today.***

- Name of child
- Class of child
- Days that you wish your child to attend

'Vulnerable children' are defined as:-

- those who are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- those who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- those who have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
- others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

CRITICAL WORKERS

The government have clarified that the following children can continue to attend school. Should you fall into one of the below categories, please respond with the information requested below. Please be aware that should you consider yourself a critical worker, we are obligated to contact employers to confirm your role and working pattern. ***Please ensure that you respond by 1pm today should you require a critical worker place for your child.***

- Name of child
- Class of child
- Name of critical worker parent
- Category under which this parent meets the critical worker requirements
- Role
- Name of employer
- Contact details for your employer
- Confirmation of whether there is an adult at home who can provide home learning if the child cannot attend school

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections:

Health and social care

- doctors
- nurses
- midwives
- paramedics
- social workers
- care workers
- other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals who must remain active during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response to deliver this approach

Key public services

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

Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of:

- the coronavirus (COVID-19) response, and the delivery of and response to EU transition
- essential public services, such as the payment of benefits and the certification or checking of goods for import and export (including animal products, animals, plants and food), including in government agencies and arm's length bodies

Food and other necessary goods

- those involved in food:
 - production
 - processing
 - distribution
 - sale and delivery
- as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines)

Public safety and national security

- police and support staff
- Ministry of Defence civilians
- contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and EU transition)
- fire and rescue service employees (including support staff)
- National Crime Agency staff
- those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas

Transport and border

- those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response and EU transition, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass and those constructing or supporting the operation of critical transport and border infrastructure through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

- staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure)
- the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage)
- information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services)

- postal services and delivery
- payments providers
- waste disposal sectors

For those children remaining at home, class teachers will be providing structured home learning from **next Monday**. In the meantime, please encourage children to do lots of reading, times tables and spellings. Class teachers will be in touch during the next few days to let you know how things will run from Monday. A separate letter later this week will also details the whole school approach, once we have some more information about numbers of children attending school/ working from home. Thank you for bearing with us while we set everything up; as you are aware, we have had extremely short notice of the need to provide home learning!

Look after yourselves and your families, and I will be in touch again as soon as we have any more information.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Milne