



Highworth Warneford School

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Dear Parents/Carers

As you would expect, we are continuing to make preparations for the school closure at the end of today. More information will follow shortly about how we are going to support the ongoing home-education of your children.

However, our first priority is to plan for the partial opening of the school for the children of key workers and those that are potentially vulnerable. The following is an extract from the latest Department for Education guidance:

As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

That is why the government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing.

And the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

That is why 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.

It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a 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.

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

Continued...

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Please, therefore, follow these key principles:

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 educational provision will be available 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.

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the sectors listed in the Appendix at the end of this letter and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision. Apologies for being blunt but it is very important that there is no attempt to bend the rules in any way.

In addition, provision can be made for vulnerable children that would include those who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Again, this provision is designed for children who cannot be safely looked after at home.

In order for the school to effectively plan our response, we need to know if your child will be attending school from Monday. Embedded in the email is a link to a very brief survey, where you can give the details needed, if you feel you meet the criteria and you are genuinely unable to provide care at home or elsewhere. If you can't access the link then please phone the school to give your details.

If your child is going to be attending school then please ask them to come in normal school uniform (for safeguarding purposes) and at the normal time. They should report to the Main Hall by 8.50am and school will finish at 3.25pm. Some other key points:

- This will be a supervised childcare service that will enable students to do the same work that their peers will be doing at home. There will be no normal teaching.
- We are unable to advise whether food will be available, as this depends on how many students and staff are going to be on the premises. In the first instance, please send them in with a packed lunch.
- Normal bus/coach services will not be running. Again, once we know what students are attending, we might be able to sort something else out. Alternatively, it may be more convenient to approach your closest school to see if they can help.

I know these are worrying times but rest assured that we are doing our very best to support you over the coming months. You will no doubt have lots of questions but I would ask you to hold off asking them unless urgent and, hopefully, I will have pre-empted your queries when I send details later today about home-schooling, collecting books/equipment and communication. Those of you whose children are in receipt of free school meals will also receive further information.

Finally, I want to say thank you for all of the messages of support that have been coming in. We are all in this together and I am confident that we can get through it together.

Yours faithfully



Andy Steele
Headteacher

Appendix – Key Worker Definition

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and 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

This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes 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, and 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 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

This includes 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

This includes 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 COVID-19 pandemic), 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

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes 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 COVID-19 response, as well as 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 and waste disposal sectors.

