



Love . Hope . Courage

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20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

## **COVID-19 School Closure to most pupils**

When the government announced that schools will be closed from the end of the school day on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March they stated that schools have to play a different and vital role in the national effort in tackling the coronavirus. This is an entirely different role for schools and school staff. It is primarily about care, not education. The children will not be doing any of the learning activities that you will have access to on our website and the structure of their day will be very different to what they are used to in school.

On Wednesday, the Department for Education also confirmed that there will be no assessments or exams for this academic year and performance tables will not be published.

Schools are being asked to care for a limited number of children. This is an emergency service and should be treated as such. Children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and **cannot be safely cared for at home.**

We have been advised that we shouldn't exceed 20% of the school population to ensure social distancing precautions are followed. Schools are also having to take into account the number of staff available to work. This means schools have to prioritise which pupils receive an offer, according to the greatest need. We are asking that children of families where one parent is a key worker but the other is not, that these children remain at home.

Taken from Government Guidance for Schools, the following key principles apply:

- If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
- Parents should do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus.
- If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response and you cannot keep your child safe at home, then your child will be prioritised for care provision at Nursling.

Following Government Guidance for Schools, we have identified the following key workers from our catchment area to take priority - in no particular order:

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Paramedics
- Pharmacists
- Police Officers
- Nursery and Teaching Staff



- Armed Forces
- Front line distributors of necessary items
- Social Workers

Following Government Guidance for Schools, the vulnerable children in our school include:

- Looked After Children
- Those on Education Health Care Plans.

Children in these categories do not have to attend school if parents/carers decide they can safely care for those children at home.

We are very aware that during this time, work places and businesses are showing leniency with employees who need time to self-isolate or for child care purposes. The Government are calling on everyone as a nation, to combat the spread of this virus.

If you contacted school yesterday to express an interest in a place, remember this is not guaranteed. We will contact you directly by 4pm today; **if you are not contacted, please do not send your children to school on Monday.**

#### Free School Meals

Children who are entitled to Free School Meals will be given a voucher for Sainsbury's. We are still waiting for guidance from the Government regarding this. As soon as we have more information we will be in touch with those families directly.

Please be assured we are doing everything we can to support the families of those most vulnerable during this uncertain time.

Kind regards



Mrs J Jearrad