

**Update following the Government's announcement on 18th March 2020
to close all schools from Friday 20th March 2020.**

The Government has closed all schools, what does this mean?

The government has officially closed all schools in the UK. They only remain open as a childcare provider for vulnerable children and the children of Key Workers. It is possible that schools may work together to provide care.

How long will the school be closed?

The Education Secretary has announced that schools will be closed until further notice. We don't know yet how long this is likely to be. It will largely depend on the spread of the outbreak.

What will happen to my child's education?

Teachers are currently putting together home learning packs that will be sent home with pupils on Friday, 20th March. Our current plan is that we will update these packs fortnightly

SATs tests for Year 2 and 6 will not be going ahead. We will use all available evidence to ensure that your child's achievements are recognised, following guidance from the DfE and Ofqual.

What is a Key Worker?

We are waiting for a definitive clarification from the government, but have a local working definition at present. Please see ParentMail form to follow.

What does vulnerable children mean?

Vulnerable children are those with a social worker and those with an EHCP plan.

My child does not fall into this category, what do I do?

If your child does not fall into this category you will need to make other childcare arrangements that adhere to the government's guidance and advice on social distancing and self-isolation. You are advised not to use grandparents for childcare as many will be considered to be an at-risk group. Parents who can work from home are encouraged to do so. You may need to take time off work to care for your child. Please speak to your employer.

We take the safeguarding of our children very seriously, please do not leave your child at home alone while you go to work. Please contact the Headteacher if you have any concerns about your own or any other child.

If the school is officially closed, is it safe for my child to be in school?

The Deputy Chief Medical Officer has explained that the decision to close schools was necessary to further reduce social contact throughout society and not because children are at any particular risk.

The school will continue to protect and support its pupils and staff by following the government's guidance on reducing social contact and by continuing to follow strict hygiene and cleaning protocols. This will include asking you to collect your child if they have symptoms of a new, continuous cough or a high temperature.

Will my child be able to have a school meal?

Meals will continue to be provided by Caterlink at £2.15 per meal (to be paid online) to those eligible to be in school. Hot meals will be served where possible but can not be guaranteed. Your child may choose to have a packed lunch from home instead.

Children eligible for Free School Meals will be entitled to a free school meal. The school may, alternatively, be able to provide children eligible for Free School Meals with vouchers.

A national voucher system will be put in place by the government as soon as possible. We will let you know the details as and when they become available.

Will the school stay open to vulnerable children and children of Key Workers throughout the Easter holidays?

Yes, schools are being encouraged to stay open.

What happens if the school has to close all together due to staff shortages?

Where schools are unable to provide provision, the Local Authority will work with the Department for Education to ensure an alternative option for vulnerable children and children of Key Workers.

Thank you to all the pupils, parents and staff for their patience and support over the past few weeks and during the weeks ahead. We will continue to update our school community as things unfold.

Hand washing advice

The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves is to wash their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Public Health England recommends that in addition to hand washing before eating, and after coughing and sneezing, everyone should also wash hands after using toilets and travelling on public transport.

Watch this short NHS film for guidance:

<https://youtu.be/bQCP7waTRWU>

Department for Education coronavirus helplineThe Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: **0800 046 8687** Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday), 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday)