

Dear Parent/Carer

You will now be aware of the government guidance on the definition of key workers and who will qualify to have their children remain in school during the coronavirus outbreak. Full guidance is available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

It is our civic duty during this national emergency to adhere to the principles of the government directive, which is to **limit numbers of pupils remaining in school as far as possible** so as to lower the risk that the virus will spread.

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.
5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

Priority must be given to children classed as vulnerable – definition is: 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 and Health Care plans. Our school will also want to support other children facing social difficulties.

Schools have been asked to continue to provide care for only a limited number of children and except where other arrangements have been made, our school will remain open until further notice, including through Easter. This is why it is vitally important to keep those numbers as low as possible so as to be able to provide adequate staffing and, if possible, a rota system for our staff so that they can have an occasional well-earned break.

Please note that if your occupation does put you in the category that you qualify for your children to attend school, if your circumstances are that you are able to keep them at home anyway, then we would ask that you should.

It is so important we all continue to work together in these difficult times.