



**Worlingham CEVC Primary School**  
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20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

### **School Closure from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020**

**This is quite a long and detailed letter. Please read through thoroughly as this contains important information on the school's work for the foreseeable future.**

Firstly I would like to thank those parents who have extended their thanks and support to myself and the school over this week. It has been a very challenging period. Your acknowledgements are appreciated.

Yesterday evening, the government announced that schools will be closing from the end of the day tomorrow for an indefinite period. Nicola Sturgeon has told the Scottish Parliament that she cannot guarantee schools will reopen before the summer holidays. We foresee that this closure will be for a significantly extended period of time.

#### **Key Workers and Vulnerable Children**

I am pleased to finally provide some clarification on key workers and vulnerable children. This was made available to schools at early this morning.

**The government are clear that 'Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be' and that 'there is no requirement for parents and carers to send their children to school if they do not need or wish to do so.'** (see 1.8 in the guidance, linked at the end of this letter.)

**They have further set out 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.

**Key Workers** are:

### **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.

If workers think they fall within the critical categories above **they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary** for the continuation of this essential public service

***We ask parents who fulfil this Key Worker criteria AND plan on using the service (even if currently self-isolating, and even if not every day) to email the school office ([office@wcevcps.org](mailto:office@wcevcps.org)) as soon as practically possible, giving as much information as you can as to how you fulfil the criteria, including why the child cannot be safely cared for at home, and how often you think your child will need to be in school. This will help us to – with some speed – plan a rota of staff to cover these children.***

### Vulnerable Children are:

Any children who have a social worker and those with education, health and care plans (EHCPs).

We have contacted parents of children with an EHCP already.

Please remember that government guidance on 'self-isolating' still stands for everyone and should be followed.

### Extended Schools and Easter

For those children who are eligible to still be in school, we plan to also keep Squirrels Breakfast and After School Club open (still chargeable as it stands). Furthermore, the government have asked us to remain open over the Easter Holidays. I am still finalising details but can confirm we are 99% certain to be able to keep open over the holidays as we have been asked to do. This may not include the actual Easter weekend.

I will be writing to parents of children who will be coming to school to clarify details of this in due course.

## **Benefit-related Free School Meals**

For children who access benefit-related free school meals (not Universal free school meals for EYFS/KS1), our kitchen will still be open and will provide your child(ren) with a meal, most likely a packed lunch.

However, someone will need to come to school to collect that meal each day between 12.30pm and 1.00pm and take it home. The Government have also announced a special 'voucher' system but as yet we have no further details.

If you are self-isolating and cannot come to school to collect, and nobody else can for you, please let us know and we will do what we can – but, we will have a reduced staff over this period so may not be able to deliver it.

As the details on any of these recently announced initiatives become clearer I will write and update you all in due course.

## **Remote 'Home' Learning**

Key Workers, etc, aside, this decision to close has not been unexpected, and we have had a plan in place to, as far as possible, enable parents and children for whom the school is closed to access learning at home.

As such, we will be using our school website, <https://www.worlingham.org/> to post learning activities for children to do at home, either on a daily basis or for more extended 'projects' to be completed over 3-5 days.

Our homepage will have up to date information, and a series of links under 'Home Learning' to click on which will take parents through to the relevant Year Group and day. For logistical reasons, we will not be requiring work to be returned for marking, but will post relevant answers to questions the next day for parents to see how their child has done. We have also included a section on (mostly) 'free to access' web resources which can also supplement the activities. Some of these are projects that other schools have also put up.

Reception will be setting their Home Learning through Tapestry: <https://tapestryjournal.com/>. A link is also provided on the homepage under 'EYFS'

I would also ask for your understanding and consideration that many staff at the school are parents themselves and are facing the challenges everyone else does in terms of getting ill, self-isolating, looking out for elderly relatives, etc. In that respect if there is a slight reduction in things being posted in certain year groups at certain times, that may well be the reason. Nevertheless, we will all endeavour to do our best during this very difficult and challenging period.

## **General Communication**

A member of office staff will still be in school each day and able to access Parentmail and the office email so we can still also use those as methods of communication whilst the school is closed.

Thank you as always for your continued support for the school, and I wish you all the very best of health. I look forward to seeing you all when we return to school, whenever that may be.

## Safeguarding Information

If you have safeguarding concerns about a child – or indeed an adult – whilst school is closed, please contact Customer First Social Care:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/advice.page?id=NYFIZI7NuJU>

Customer first phone number for CHILDREN: **Call 0808 800 4005**

Customer First phone number for ADULTS: **Call 0800 917 1109**

Yours faithfully

Paul Seeman

Headteacher

Full guidance is here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

