



Headteacher:

Mrs J Hewson - BA Hons. PGCE, NPQH, MDip.

Deputy Headteacher:

Mrs L Tottie – BA Hons, NASENCO, PGCert

20th March 2020

Email: chapelford_admin@omegamat.co.uk

School website: www.chapelfordvillageprimary.co.uk

Facebook: facebook.com/chapelfordvillageprimary

Tel: 01925 712554

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Coronavirus update – school closure to most pupils

Following on from my last update, I'm now writing to let you know that we have now been instructed to close the school to almost all children from today (Friday 20th March 2020) until further notice. We realise at this time many of you are asking questions about which children should attend – I hope that the following information answers these questions for you. If you have any further questions, please can you email school on chapelford_admin@omegamat.co.uk - we urge you to keep the telephone lines clear and reception area of school at this time. Please be aware that as a school we do not have any further information other than what we are sharing with you in this letter. As always, we will try and support your enquiries but please understand that our capacity of staff is limited at this time and the information we currently have is below.

At this time, for the safety of our staff and their wider families and the children of key workers who will have no alternative provision for child care, I urge you, at this crucial time to read the guidance and support us as a school in being able to support our key workers and their children. As a school we will only have limited capacity as some of our staff are self-isolating under the guidance received and we are already operating with a vastly reduced staffing structure. I anticipate that this overtime will only further reduce. Therefore, working in partnership with you all is vital to support this unprecedented situation.

Here is the latest information that we have received from Government:

The advice from Government is that if children can stay at home safely, 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 – this includes our staff here in school.

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.

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.

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 critical sectors listed below, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision:

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.

Today I will be writing to all of your children to ensure that they are communicated with and to try and give them some perspective and reassurance at this time – please take the time to read this with your children. Please visit the school website www.chapelfordvillageprimary.co.uk where we have endeavoured to support you and your

families during this period with a wide range of learning activities, support and ideas to keep your children occupied for the time we are off school.

I am sure you will join me in thanking all the staff, across the school here at Chapelford, for their resilience and support at these times – they truly have been amazing at supporting the children in school and keeping a sense of community and compassion. Today for all of us is uncertain and upsetting but as I have said to the children – this time will pass. As a school we will continue to communicate with you in a transparent and timely manner so that you are kept fully informed of developments in relation to school reopening in the future.

On a personal note I wish all of you and your families the very best at this time and look forward to seeing you all returning to school in the future – your children will be no doubt much taller and hopefully as adults we will all be wiser!

Kindest regards and very best wishes,

Mrs. Joanne Hewson
Headteacher.

