



Duke Street Primary School



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20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

The government issued this information at midnight last night.

As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This is why the government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing.

Our school is following government advice and are asking that parents keep their children at home, wherever possible, and will only remain open for those children whose parents' work is critical to the COVID-19 response and have no alternatives for childcare.

School will close after today and will only provide support for a **small** proportion of pupils as we have to follow these 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. If your child is in the vulnerable category, please consider whether school is the right option for your child (ren). In some cases it may be, whereas in others, you may feel that your child is more likely to be distressed or may be more likely to contract and spread the virus by attending school, and prefer to keep them at home.
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.

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.**

As the measures to close school are in force to reduce social contact in order to prevent virus spread, we are not able to have lots of children in school. So many of our parents fall into the key worker category that we could end up with huge numbers in school and an extremely unsafe environment in respect of COVID-19.

We are forced, in the first instance, to say that we will only be offering places to pupils who have both parents who are key or critical worker and who do not have a parent or sibling of older teenage years (16+) to look after them at home.

I know there will be many parents who wish that they did not have to bring their child into what will be an environment with a heightened risk of contracting Covid-19. I wish to re-assure you that all my staff will move mountains to keep your children safe. To that end, at the end of school today a room will be converted into a temporary isolation room and sickbay. Any child or staff member (unable to immediately

leave) who becomes unwell with symptoms while in our care will be immediately removed to this symptom isolation room. No symptom free person will enter the room. Family members will be called immediately. We will also not allow entry into the building by any parent or visitor. The school doors will be locked at all times.

The information about who is a critical or key worker is given below but note that it must be in areas critical to COVID-19 response only.

We therefore ask you the following:

- Consider how you could work with friends to share childcare in small groups.
- To ensure that you can provide school with supplementary information as to why your child is required to attend provision in school and that both parents (or if you are a single parent) is required to work in an area which is critical to the COVID-19 response. 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.
- Contact **Mrs Nicholls** on bursar@dukestreet-pri.lancs.sch.uk if you believe that you are sure that you meet the criteria above (which is linked to the information below) and will require essential childcare in school, as quickly as possible and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will process this and respond to your request at the earliest opportunity, bearing in mind the considerable strains that the school is under at the present time. Thank you in advance for your anticipated patience with this. Also, if you are uncertain and wish to discuss your, or your child's individual needs then also contact **Mrs Nicholls by email**.
If you are worried that your circumstances may change, or that you may need part time cover, then also contact **Mrs Nicholls by email**.
- Contact Mrs Nicholls on bursar@dukestreet-pri.lancs.sch.uk if you can support your child's learning from home and will be keeping your child at home.
- Contact your child's class teacher if your child has difficulty accessing online home learning by using the email for your child's class e.g. Maple Class maple@dukestreet-pri.lancs.sch.uk Further information will be sent out by teachers, but just to confirm you will not be required to print out resources at home.
- **Please make sure that you contact us by email as soon as possible, but we ask that all responses are received by us before the end of Saturday 21st March in order that provision can be fully planned.**

We will:

- Have staff working from home to provide online learning that you can work on from home.
- For emergency key workers with no other alternatives, we will attempt to provide as much care as we can, and as our staffing allows.
- Keep in regular contact with you, and your child(ren).
- Provide the same digital resources for you to learn with at home, as we will be using for the children in school.
- Contact you quickly when we receive advice that school can start to re-open.



I can only thank all of you for how you are supporting school already. We all have responsibility now to our society, and to each other. What we do now will determine how this virus actually spreads in our country. We must now focus upon advice given and to follow this, as this is all we can do if we love each other and care about the society in which we live as this will make a massive difference to how the virus spreads.

We appreciate the financial implications that these measures place on all our families who may be unable to work. Our outreach team are here to offer advice and signposting to families who may struggle, so please get in touch.

Our staff will do all they can to play their part in keeping the country going through this crisis at the same time as attempting to keep everyone safe and well. They are working under tremendous pressure at the same time as trying to keep their own families safe and well.

Keep well and stay safe during these difficult times. I hope to see you all back in school very soon.

Yours sincerely

Mr Kidd
Headteacher

Mrs Ridley
Deputy Headteacher

Mr Brennan
Chair of Governors

Critical/Key workers

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.

