



Oughton Primary & Nursery School

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Headteacher: Mrs L Clayton

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20th March 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers

SCHOOL CLOSURE: KEY WORKERS & SCHOOL PROVISION

As you know, the school is closing at 3.15pm today and will not be open again for the foreseeable future. This is a unique situation and I know there is a lot of speculation.

Since my letter yesterday, and after a prolonged wait which caused considerable uncertainty for both schools and parents, the government released its latest guidance at midnight last night.

As I know you will appreciate, this has given all schools very little time to assess how provision may be offered and what capacity can be made available.

The purpose of school closures is to drastically reduce the numbers of children and adults coming together to try and curb the spread of infection during this national crisis.

Therefore, even if your child is eligible to attend the provision we will offer, I would urge all parents to only use this option if absolutely necessary. If children can be cared for at home during this time, they should be.

"...the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, 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."

"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." Gov.uk

The government has provided a list of occupations that are considered to be 'Key Workers' which is copied at the end of this letter. Although initial reports suggested that both parents needed to come into this category, the guidance now states that if only one parent is a key worker, they can be considered for school provision.

We will be offering a **small number** of school places here at Oughton as follows:

1. Vulnerable pupils: those with a named social worker or an EHCP
2. Pupils where BOTH parents or single parents are key workers; priority given to frontline NHS staff & emergency services
3. Pupils where one parent is a key worker; priority given to frontline NHS staff & emergency services

Several key worker parents contacted us yesterday to register their interest for school provision. We **now need to know which days of the week your child/ren would need to attend**. Please contact the office TODAY with this information or email admin@oughton.herts.sch.uk by 4pm.

In the light of the new guidance, if you now believe your child may be eligible, **please get in touch today**.

If your child is offered a place, please note the following:

- On site provision will NOT be normal school; children will not be having formal lessons/teaching
- Children will be supervised by a small team of staff and this will vary from day to day
- There will be pre-booked and paid Breakfast club from 7.45am and then normal school hours 8.45am – 3.15pm
- Children attending do not need to wear school uniform and should enter and be collected via the red gate by Moss Way, via Lime (Breakfast Club entrance)
- Children who are eligible for free school meals will continue to receive a school lunch; alternatively children can bring a packed lunch. We expect to still be able to offer lunches to all children on site, but this is not yet confirmed and I will let you know as soon as possible how this will work.
- Whilst we will endeavour to offer this provision for pupils, please note that a total school closure may still be necessary if I do not have sufficient staff available (due to sickness or self-isolation). Should this occur, the local authority may be able to help with sourcing a place at another setting.
- Please be aware that total school closures to ALL pupils cannot be ruled out if government directives change.
- If your child displays any symptoms while attending the school based provision, we will ask you to collect them immediately.

School Meals / Free School Meals

Children who are in school will be provided with a school meal (or may bring in a packed lunch).

Children who are eligible for benefit related free school meals but who are being cared for at home will be entitled to a packed lunch prepared by the school kitchen. These will need to be collected from the school. Further details will be sent out to the eligible children. This will take effect from Monday 23rd March.

Over the course of today we will be doing our very best to accommodate those children who need our provision.

I realise that this is a very unsettling, upsetting time for many people and school closures are an added source of anxiety. This is the same for our school staff who are equally concerned about the safety of their own loved ones and families. Please bear with us while we navigate this new way of working; we are doing our very best to help the national effort at this time.

Yours sincerely



Lisa Clayton
Headteacher

Key Worker List

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.