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20 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

You will be aware that the government announced on Wednesday that from Monday 23 March, schools will only be open for certain groups of students. The government waited until midnight last night to release the detail of this so schools are today devising systems to make this work. This is a huge undertaking so please be patient with us.

The information can be found here:

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

There are two ways we could approach this. We could be hugely bureaucratic and worry about exact definitions or we can just crack on and make this work for next week. We are just going to crack on and make it work with your good will and the good will of our staff.

The government has asked us to stay open for all students it defines as “vulnerable”. *Vulnerable children include 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, health and care \(EHC\) plans](#).* If you care for a child who the government classes as “vulnerable”, we will welcome them very warmly in our schools. If however, you choose to keep your child at home we will respect that decision and support you the best way we can.

The government has also asked us to stay open for children with “**parents [or carers] whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response**”. The government’s list is in the guidance above. Please do not worry about exact definitions at this stage and whether it applies to one parent or two. All I ask is for you to look at the guidance and check if you believe your work is critical to the COVID-19 response. If you believe this applies to you and you have no other option than to send your child to us so that you can go to work, then please do so. We will be happy to care for them knowing that by doing so we are helping you to help others.

The government also states: “**If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be**”. If you have any other safe childcare option, please use that. If not, we stand ready to help

We too have many staff now who need to be at home. Therefore we need to know as early as possible how many young people we will be caring for so that we can plan for safe staffing levels.



The Education Alliance is a charitable limited company registered in England and Wales No. 7542211 whose registered office is at the above address.



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To help us plan we ask all parents/carers who will be sending children to us on any day next week to complete the form on the link below. Please note you may send your child on individual days of the week, it does not have to be all five.

<https://forms.gle/H4bFrqE1upmHSGJv7>

As time moves on we will develop better systems but for now and for next week, all we need to know is who is coming and we will do the rest.

We want to make your child's experience to be as positive as possible and we want to celebrate the extraordinary work of our country's key workers. Therefore, on arrival each day we ask that they come through main reception so we can greet them. We would like to capture each day how many key workers' shifts we are supporting and want to share that back with you. Children can come to school in non-uniform, bringing a bag and basic equipment. We hope each day to provide a free breakfast and free lunch as a token of our gratitude for the work you are doing.

We will improve this plan next week and get to a point of smooth operation. We stand ready to look after those children who need us. I will write to you again early next week as the situation develops and with more information about issues like cover over the Easter holiday.

Thank you for the truly extraordinary levels of goodwill you have shown so many of us over the last week. We are truly grateful. I am indebted to our staff who are experiencing all the same challenges around their own health and their families as everyone else. With collective kindness, decency and good grace we will make this work.

Kind regards

Jonny Uttley
CEO

Richard Williman
Headteacher



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