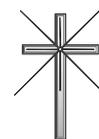




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20 March 2020

Dear Parents,

As you are no doubt aware, schools have been directed to close at the end of today and remain closed until further notice **except for children of key workers and vulnerable children**, as part of the country's ongoing response to COVID-19 (coronavirus).

I am writing to confirm that at ten past midnight today, the UK Government issued the following guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision>

I have highlighted some key points below.

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE:

The government is asking "parents to keep their children at home, **wherever possible**, and asking 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."

"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."

"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."

"Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors (key areas outlined here; for full details, please see [linked document](#)):

- Health and social care
- Education and childcare
- Key public services
- Local and national government
- Food and other necessary goods
- Public safety and national security
- Transport
- Utilities, communication and financial services



“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**:

- If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 ([in the linked document](#)), and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision.”

Further advice and guidance for parents is available 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>

THORNER'S RESPONSE:

These are difficult times and we will do **everything** we can to stand together with our community and help this national effort. To this end, our school and Fledglings **WILL REMAIN OPEN AND DELIVER PROVISION FOR THE CHILDREN OF CRITICAL KEY WORKERS** who have **NO OTHER OPTIONS OPEN TO THEM.**

If you are planning to use our provision, please contact me **URGENTLY** via email at office@thorners.dorset.sch.uk.

If you have a question, please email office@thorners.dorset.sch.uk.

Our thoughts are with our families at this difficult time. Take care, everyone.

I thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Jyotsna Chaffey
Headteacher

