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20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Further to the information that was distributed earlier this morning regarding key workers, I am writing to clarify some important points regarding the emergency provision in school from next week.

Parents are being asked to keep their children at home wherever possible and we have been asked to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend – within the Government’s own guidance is the phrase “continue to provide care for a limited number of children”. 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. **Where an adult is at home who can provide childcare, this must be the first resort for parents, even those who are key workers.**

I must stress that the provision within school during the period of closure WILL NOT be linked to the National Curriculum and, in line with Government instruction, is no longer about educating children per se, but about offering emergency childcare for those who need it most. Activities will take place across the day, but will not involve structured, formal learning such as is the case in school under normal circumstances.

At present, we are trying to complete our list of calls to parents to gauge the level of provision we might need to put in place for next week: I must at this point offer my eternal thanks to Mrs Dearlove, Mrs Page and two workers from Stockton Borough Council who have taken this task up on my behalf across the day. Current numbers suggest that the provision next week will be based around three classes, each staffed by teachers from that age group along with at least one teaching assistant on a rota basis: we will have an Early Years provision based in Foundation Stage, a KS1 provision based in the Y2 classroom and a KS2 provision based in the Y6 classroom. Staffing will need to remain flexible, and the decision to keep school open for certain children hinges on the availability of my staff: should staff illness dictate that we could not safely operate as a school, in consultation with my Chair of Governors and the CEO of The 1590 Trust, we may need to enforce a full school closure.

During the period of closure, children still attending school are subject to the same expectations and rules as usual: uniform should be worn. Any illness or absence should be reported via the School Office in the usual way and follow-up checks will be carried out in the absence of any pupil whom we were expecting to attend on any given day. Obviously, any children who are currently self-isolating or are symptomatic should adhere to Government guidance around such isolation.



School hours will be 8:45am until 3:15pm. Children should all enter school between 8:45am and 9:00am via the main entrance and be checked off on entry. Please ensure PE kits are in school as we are going to try and do lots of fun activities outside as much as possible. Miss Keegan, who runs the Levendale Childcare Centre (our before- and after-school club) is intending to remain open next week **for children already on her books who have key worker parents**. We do not run that provision and any queries should be addressed to Miss Keegan, not the school. A packed lunch must be provided on Monday by parents of children who are attending. From Tuesday onwards, Stockton catering will be providing a limited choice of lunches for those children who currently have a school meal.

For those children who are not returning to school in the near future, work should have been sent home today. This same work will be made available, as far as possible, on dedicated year group pages on our website (please check Facebook, the app and our SchoolComms system on Monday for details of this). All our contingency planning around possible closure was based around a short, two-week period up to Easter and therefore work sent home today was meant to reflect that. Currently, we are unaware of how long we may be closed for and therefore staff have been asked to ensure that weekly updates after Easter are posted on the same website pages for parents to access. We will also be working on a comprehensive list of online resources for parents to access as necessary. The most important skills that be easily practised at home are reading, writing and mental maths!

Where a child has been absent today, packs can be collected where appropriate from the School Office from Monday. Please do not attend if you are currently self-isolating or symptomatic and please also ring ahead to ensure there is something for you to collect! I would also ask that no children are allowed to enter the school site at any point unless we are expecting them to attend: the guidelines around schools running at minimum capacity are there for our protection and must be adhered to.

The situation in which we now find ourselves is as far removed from how I would want to end the Spring Term as possible. We said farewell to our Y6 children this afternoon, not knowing whether we will see them again before they move to secondary school in September – this hardly seems fair, and they even seemed upset at the thought of not being able to sit their SATs in May! I sincerely hope that we will see you all again soon. My staff and I will be available by telephone over the coming weeks and, if you have any queries regarding work sent home, please make an appointment as necessary to discuss this with your child's class teacher over the phone.

Please ensure that you look after yourselves and fill your children's lives full of love, comfort and reassurance in the coming weeks as the world can seem a scary and intimidating place for youngsters who sometimes aren't as quick to rationalise situations as we might be.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. R. Beadnall  
Headteacher