



St Ippolyts C.E. (Aided) Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs. R. E. Peddie

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20th March 2020

Dear Parents,

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.

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 absolutely 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.

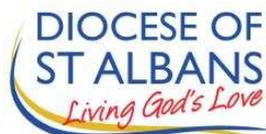
It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals 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 St Ippolyts. As numbers will be very limited, these will be offered on a priority basis 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 me directly on head@stipps.herts.sch.uk

In the light of this 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 no Early Bird Club or after school activities. We can offer normal school hours 8.45am – 3.15pm
- Children attending do not need to wear school uniform and should enter and be collected via the main doors at the front of school
- 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.

Children who are eligible for benefit-related free school meals but who are being cared for at home will be entitled to receive some assistance during this period of school closure. This may be in the form of shopping tokens or similar. I will be in touch when we know more about how this will work in practice.

I would like to reiterate that this service offered by the school should only be accessed by parents as a last resort, not a first. The ultimate aim of school closures is to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by ensuring social distancing of adults and children. This will obviously only be successful if the vast majority of children are cared for at home.

Over the course of today we will be doing our very best to see which children can be accommodated from next week and we will be in touch as soon as possible.

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



Mrs RE Peddie
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.