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Headteacher: Mr. Aaron Wanford MA, B.Ed. (Hons), NPQH

Monday, 4th January 2021

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Continued School Closure – Staffing and Safety Nursery and Year One

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware, the government announced on 30th December that, whilst many primary schools will be opening on 4th January, there would be a number of schools in critical areas throughout the country where the coronavirus infection rate means that the opening of schools in those areas would need to be delayed.

Although Buckinghamshire was not in one of those areas, we are still required to ensure that our risk assessments make it safe enough for us to open our school to pupils during the current pandemic. Our risk assessments are fully reviewed by REAch2 Academy Trust leaders to ensure that all the information is carefully considered so we act in the best interests of children and families.

Following a review of our risk assessment, I am writing to let you know that we are unfortunately unable to fully open the school at this time and will be closed to pupils in **Nursery and Year One**. This is because our risk assessment shows that we do not have enough available staff to operate the school effectively.

We will therefore only be opening the school to provide face-to-face education for those pupils who are vulnerable or from families of critical workers in Nursery and Year One. For other pupils in these year groups, we will provide remote learning and work that can be done at home.

Our school leaders along with Trust leaders will review our risk assessments daily with a view to re-opening the affected year groups when it is possible to do so. For the time being, Nursery and Year One will be closed at least up until Friday, 15th January, at which point we will be able to provide an update on staffing capacity and safety.

Face-to-Face Education

Although the school will be partially closed, we will still be able to provide face-to-face education for the following pupils in Nursery and Year One who will be expected to attend school:

- Children of critical workers
- Vulnerable pupils: those with an EHCP, with a Social Worker, or other pupils deemed as potentially vulnerable due to personal circumstances.

These pupils should attend school as normal from tomorrow (Tuesday, 5th January).

Nursery Children

For nursery children who are eligible to attend, provision will be open between 8.35am-3.15pm and we will not provide any wrap around care. Please note that we are unable to offer any additional

sessions to critical workers at this time so children should only attend their usual pre-booked sessions. We will contact parents/carers separately regarding nursery fees and payment on accounts.

If you are a critical worker, please check whether your child is eligible to attend by clicking on the government website [here](#) or by seeing the end of this letter with the categories listed.

Guidance to professionals' states that although this provision is available to any family within these groups as long as at least one person is a designated key worker, *'many parents/carers working in these sectors may be able to ensure that their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be'*.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to consider that this face-to-face provision is only designed for families with **NO alternative**. Even if you are eligible as a critical worker, please make every effort to keep your child at home if you can.

If you require a place for your child as a critical worker, then please complete the Microsoft Forms questionnaire [here](#) for Nursery and [here](#) for Year One **by 7.30pm this evening**; this includes children who are new to Little Ridges as the settling in sessions will no longer be able to take place this week. Please note that the spaces are for all day everyday and you will **not** be able to pick and choose sessions as it will be normal school hours. Please assume that your child has a place and continue to bring them, as normal, on Tuesday morning at the usual drop-off time. Children will be required to be in full uniform.

If your child has an EHCP, has an allocated Social Worker or is considered to be vulnerable and would benefit from being in school, we will contact you to confirm if your child should be attending school. One of the staff will telephone you to arrange this.

Remote Learning

In addition, we will also continue to provide home learning activities for other pupils who are not at school. Information about our approach to remote learning will be provided in a separate letter, sent out later today or first thing tomorrow morning as soon as we have finalised and prepared our online materials to publish.

Lunches

Pupils who are attending the setting for face-to-face learning can continue to have school dinners (if they have these) or bring their packed lunch as normal. For the Year One pupils not attending the setting, we will be contacting you separately tomorrow with further information about how these can be accessed.

Keeping Pupils Safe – Staying in Touch

Although the school will not be open for all pupils, we still want to stay in touch with you so that we can support our families.

It is our intention that a member of staff will make contact with you via telephone each week to see how your child is getting on and to see if they can support you in any way. For those vulnerable pupils, more regular contact will be maintained, up to three times a week.

And finally...

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. We know that the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic are not yet over, but with your help we are determined to continue to do the very best for all our children throughout this difficult time.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. Aaron Wanford
Executive Headteacher



Mr. Sean English
Acting Head of School

Critical Workers

Parents/carers whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections.

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:

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals who must remain active during the coronavirus (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
- 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) response, and the delivery of and response to EU transition
- essential public services, such as the payment of benefits and the certification or checking of goods for import and export (including animal products, animals, plants and food), 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and EU transition)
- 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 and border

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response and EU transition, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass and those constructing or supporting the operation of critical transport and border infrastructure 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- 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
- waste disposal sectors