



St. Mary's CE Primary School

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Coronavirus – Reduced Provision Arrangements

Friday 20th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Although St. Mary's School will be closed to all pupils as of 3.20pm today, the government has asked schools to provide ongoing support for some families. The government has issued clear guidance to schools on this provision and the guidance is clear: **in order to further limit the spread of COVID-19, if children can stay safely at home they should.** **Everyone** should now be following the governments advice on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing.

During closure, should any family have a safeguarding concern about a child in their own or another's family then they should call Wandsworth's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on: 0208-871-6622

The government's rationale for this partial opening of schools is 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 therefore cannot be safely cared for at home. This is not a statutory requirement – schools are being asked to help as part of a national response and we are happy to continue to support our key worker colleagues and some other families in this way. Therefore, **some families will receive an offer of a place to attend St. Mary's School from Monday 23rd March onwards and only families with an offer can attend.**

The government have outlined 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.
- Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

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 arm's 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.

Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child that can safely be cared for at home should be.

Vulnerable children include:

- Children who are supported by social care
- Those with safeguarding and welfare needs – including those with child in need and child protection plans
- Looked after children
- Young carers
- Disabled children and those with Education, Health and Care Plans

As yet, we are not sure what this provision will look like, it may be more about care than education. All expectations regarding educational provision have been lifted. Schools which provide ongoing care for some pupils will be free to determine what the provision looks like and what they deem best for the pupils they are supporting. In offering this provision we will need to balance government advice on the proportion of pupils it is advisable to support in order to maintain efforts to delay the spread of the virus with the number of staff available to work. This will require us to prioritise which pupils receive an offer, according to the greatest need.

As a school we are responsible for offering and prioritising places for pupils who may be eligible to attend. Depending on numbers, it may be that we are not able to provide this offer in full from Monday morning and may need a few more days to plan; or that we offer places to a small group where the need is greatest and expand where possible. We will need to make ongoing daily decisions about whether it is safe to continue to partially open the school, as we have been doing over the past few weeks.

If you think you may be eligible for ongoing childcare as a key worker, please fill out the tear off slip below and return it to the school by 2.30pm this afternoon. This can be done in the text of an email if it is easier. Our understanding is that the highest priority will be for families where both parents are key workers or where a sole parent is a key worker. It will be necessary for front line workers to demonstrate evidence of their role during this time. Evidence can be a short letter on headed paper from your employer or an official work pass or identity card.

Other identified groups (those with an EHCP, those with an allocated social worker, or other families where vulnerabilities make it impossible/not safe for them to remain at home) will receive a personalised letter inviting your children to access school provision. This will follow in the post or via school in the next day or two.

School will be open to the invited families from 9am until 3:20pm as far as possible until the end of the closure period or unless directed otherwise by the Government.

Please be assured that if you are a key worker or considered to have a vulnerable child, further attendance is not compulsory. No fines will be issued by St. Mary's to families choosing to keep their families at home during this period.

Provision will be provided by a variety of teaching and support staff as well as volunteers each day.

Yours sincerely,

Cheryl Payne
Head Teacher

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Child/ren's Name/s: _____

Child's Class/Year Group (please tick):

Nursery	Reception	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six

Parent's Name/s: _____

I would like the school to provide childcare as I am a keyworker:

Yes No

Who in the household is/are key workers?

Single parent

One parent

Both parents

I can provide proof that I am a key worker (please attach)