



Community, Creativity,
Challenge and Individuality

Wheelock Primary School
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20th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Guidance for schools remaining open from Monday was posted in the early hours this morning (see link below). The guidance is clear that “if children can stay safely at home, they should.”

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision?fbclid=IwAR0bw2mh1vPBfncuKKMfNm0eexgk0q65mvGesGQBavtsVAe_bclmIBIF9A

My view, based on the guidance, is that all parents should endeavour to keep their children at home as long as it is safe to do so. The fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread across our school and the Cheshire community. Outside school parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way that can continue to spread the virus.

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors, our school staff are committed to providing childcare whilst you are at work.

If you have a member of the family of the age 18 or over and under the age of 70 in your household who is not a key worker then we are expecting that your child will not attend school. The purpose of this is to prevent the spread of this virus that could have dire consequences for vulnerable sections of our school and wider communities.

I have instructed the Headteacher of your school to collect the information on who will be attending school next week in the following ways:

1. All parents who are defined as key workers as described in the link above are asked to email the school office address as soon as they possibly can if they would like their child to be in school next week. This is on the understanding that there is no other adult as described above who can provide the childcare.

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2. All children who the school have identified as having an EHCP or as vulnerable in some way will be phoned by the school to see if you are intending to send your child to school. Please make sure that if you are it is as a last resort.
3. All parents who have said that it is essential that their child attends the school next week will be phoned by the school to confirm the details. Please be aware that you will be asked about the other adults who are in the house who could provide childcare.

If the school provides before and after school provision we are intending this to still be open for the children who are offered a place in school only – please note that this will not be free as it is a continuation of the existing paid for provision.

Furthermore, we will take all practical steps to keep our vulnerable children safe and we will endeavour to provide respite care, when and if it is needed.

In summary, the scientific guidance is clear the fewer children we have in school each day the greater chance we have of limiting the virus spreading.

These are testing times and it is our civic and moral duty to keep our community safe, whilst at the same time keeping our critical services operating. This means that having as few children and staff in schools as possible. The government are intending that 10% of the children attend school and this is a figure that we are expecting to provide places for.

In these very troubling times it is important to remember that the actions that we take could have significant implications for others in our communities. As a group of schools we have to balance the need to stay open for as few children as possible and supporting the needs of our families. Across the country everyone is making their own mind up as to how to deal with this and school leaders are facing abuse and anger from parents with regards to their decisions. I would appeal to everyone to understand that we have not made any decision lightly and we need to, as a community, do everything that we can to protect everybody.

As we are reliant on government advice and guidance we will update our approach as new guidance is released. Please can I ask that when new guidance is issued you don't contact the schools but wait for us to contact you.

Thank you to those of you have sent messages of support to our school staff, it is much appreciated.

Best wishes



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Dan Thomas

CEO

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