



## 19.03.20 – Information for Parents on School Closure

Dear Parents,

Dorin Park School will close on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March as part of the government-directed response to the coronavirus crisis. On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, the building will re-open to provide care to children of key workers ([see separate letter](#)); also to provide care ([which is not an education offer](#)) to children with EHCPs **if** parents want to access this **and** risk assessment indicates it is safe to do so.

To ensure our parents fully understand the offer and the risk assessment situation, we will call everyone during Friday 20<sup>th</sup> to determine whether each family is accessing the offer from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>. What follows is an explanation of the information currently available to aid a complex decision.

1. You have already received the government guidance around social distancing for people with health conditions. The advice from government was that people with this list of health conditions practise social distancing for 12 weeks from this weekend. That includes ‘working from home’ if possible. Please note that this applies to all ages from zero upwards and, as such, we have advised parents to take serious note. Government gives this advice because people with these health conditions are at much more risk if infected with coronavirus. Many of our parents have already decided to take their children out of school for this time. At the end of this, it is hoped that the virus spread may be under better control. If you are not sure whether your child falls into this category, we can work with you to assess that. We have had several parents worried about fines for attendance. This **will not** happen. Your child’s attendance until Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March is recorded under a special code and is authorised. From Friday, schools are closed and you are under no obligation to send your child in until they re-open. We fully support decisions based on keeping your child safe from infection when they are in a high-risk category.
2. All children with EHCPs may be able to access a care offer during the school day for the duration of the school closure period. Children do not have to access this and parents may wish to keep them at home. You are under no obligation to send your child in until schools re-open for education. If Social Care identifies your child as vulnerable, you may be asked to send them in, but we will contact you directly about this. Please note that we cannot guarantee those accessing the care offer will be able to do so in Dorin Park and/or with Dorin Park staff. This will depend on availability and the ongoing staffing situation. Where possible, it is preferable to keep our pupils in their own school but we are unable to guarantee this.



INVESTORS IN PUPILS

Head Teacher - Jane Hughes

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Until the announcement on Wednesday evening, we were concentrating our efforts on preparing work for all our pupils currently at home. As we are now closed, we cannot continue with that as we are now providing care. Dorin Park staff may be sent to other schools and therefore I am regretfully unable to make a guaranteed provision for online learning and supportive daily contact. We do want to carry out our plans to continue education for our pupils as far as possible, but I am advised to make you aware this may not be possible at this stage. We will do our very best in a difficult situation. Staff will be delivering the work packs we have made over the next few days and sending out online learning. I very much hope we will be able to continue to do more, but we have been instructed that provision of care for the children of key workers is our first focus in order to support the fight against coronavirus.

We are now required to risk assess each child with an EHCP separately in discussion with the parents. Our risk assessment is based on whether it is safer for the child to be at home or in a school for provision of care at this time. Please read the information carefully with that in mind.

As you can appreciate, we have an extremely short timeframe to complete a complex task. We will make contact with all families on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March but we will prioritise early calls to families we have not already had discussions with. In the event that we cannot have a senior staff member speak to all families, a member of the admin team will confirm that families who have already indicated their child will not be in on Monday are still in that position. Senior staff will then call them on Monday for their personalised conversation.

Thank you for your patience and support. I know you will have many questions but we do not yet have briefing documents from the Department for Education (DfE) so there are some questions we will not be able to answer fully until next week. We will continue to give you daily updates on the situation.

Regards,

Jane Hughes