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20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As per the latest guidance from Government (20 March 2020) our school will be closed to all pupils with the exception of providing childcare to children of critical workers and vulnerable children. We will endeavour to do what we can for as long as we are able.

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 by the Government in this [information](#). 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.

Please therefore, follow these key principles:

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then provision will be available for them.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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 and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for provision in schools.

We are very grateful to those parents who have responded to our survey of need which is enabling us to plan the right staffing levels to support the care of children next week. We asked all parents who would be deemed to be a critical worker to complete the survey by 9am on Friday 20 March.

For those children who will be attending Orchard Vale Community School next week for childcare we will be open from 8am to 5pm. Please bring your child to school only for the hours that you require the childcare for. We will provide lunch for the staff and children attending each day.

The COVID-19 outbreak and schools acting in this way presents dynamic and ever-changing challenges. Please be aware that our current plan for provision only covers next week. We will be working next week with the local authority and other schools to review and clarify the nature and extent of provision for the Easter holidays and beyond. This may include schools working together to provide childcare for pupils from several schools in one place. We will, of course, keep you updated at the earliest opportunity. However, for next week it will only be children from Orchard Vale Community School that will be able to attend. The only exception will be, where necessary, reserving a space for children of our school staff who are offering childcare on any given day.

PTO/...

In line with Government principles of social distancing we respectfully request that parents do not enter the school building.

- Children in Little Seeds, Nursery or Reception should be brought to the external Nursery entrance, next to the playground, to register. Please ring the doorbell and a member of staff will take your child in.
- Children in Key Stage 1 and 2 should be brought to the main office by an adult to be registered and allowed into school.

Please only send your child with a coat and drinks bottle, unless asked otherwise.

We will be observing Public Health England guidance and social distancing where possible, for instance:

- Regular supervised hand washing for all children, staff and visitors on entry to/exit from the building.
- Regular supervised hand washing including before eating/after using the toilet.
- Children and staff being reminded not to touch their face.
- Children and staff being reminded to cough/sneeze into tissue.
- Physical contact being kept to a minimum, including within subjects like PE, break times and assemblies.

We would also very much like to ask parents to keep a keen eye with regard to their children exhibiting any symptoms of COVID 19, including regular temperature taking. If any child or member of staff does feel ill they will be isolated with supervision and sent home immediately. Please ensure the office have your up to date emergency contact numbers.

Online Learning

The majority of children will not be attending childcare from next week and they will be expected to engage in online learning where possible. Our arrangements for online learning are as follows:

- Home learning will be posted on Tapestry or Seesaw each week. You will have already received log in details and instructions on how to use these. These APPs will work on phones, tablets and computers.
- If you do not have an internet connection, please contact the office.

I am sure we all recognise and appreciate the role that our school staff are playing in addressing and meeting the challenges of this national crisis. I know, as parents, you will do everything that you can to support them.

If you require any further information, please see the Devon County Council website via this [link](#) or Public Health England via this [link](#)

Thank you all for your continued cooperation.

Fiona Pearce
HEADTEACHER