



Hempshill Hall Primary School

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20th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We now have an update on who will be eligible to attend school during the main closure period. However, before looking at the list, please note the government statement **'there is no requirement for parents and carers to send their children to school if they do not need or wish to do so.'**

Key worker groups – please read the full list for further details (see link at the bottom of the letter)

- Health and social care
- Education and childcare
- Key public services
- Local and National Government
- Food and other necessary goods
- Public safety and national safety
- Transport
- Utilities, communication and financial service

*"The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. **If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.** That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for **those children who absolutely need to attend.**"*

*It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But **the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.** Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue 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 cannot be safely cared for at home.***

*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.**"*



I would urge you to consider this advice very seriously. Whilst we are staying open and we want to do everything to support the government's strategy to tackle COVID-19, it would defeat the whole purpose of this measure if more children than absolutely necessary were in school. And of course the more children who come in, the more staff we need to come in at a time when they are being told to isolate and social distance as much as possible – and many have young families, their own health concerns and vulnerable members in the household to consider too.

Children absolutely **MUST NOT** be in school if reasonable, safe alternative arrangements can be made. Neither should they be in because you feel they will benefit from a continuing education. That may sound drastic, but it is the stark truth of the situation we are in: we're effectively opening as a shelter to allow key workers to do their invaluable work during this crisis, not as a school. Rest assured for those who do have to send their children in, though, that staff will ensure that they feel safe, secure and are occupied with meaningful activities. The welfare and mental health of the children who come in is crucial at a time when their parents/carers are on the frontline of this emergency.

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

As stated on the previous letter please let us know a.s.a.p. if your child needs to attend.

There is an additional letter for key workers and the arrangements which are in place.

Yours sincerely

Sally Dakin and Karen Gregg

