

St John's Church of England Primary School

'The JOY of the Lord is Your Strength' (Nehemiah 8:10)

Headteacher: Mr Phil Thomson



Friday 20th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear in Department for Education Guidance published this morning. From Monday 23rd March school is closed for the vast majority of students. If your child 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.**

We are in the process of contacting parents and carers of vulnerable students to assess whether they need to be in school. This included students who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors are outlined below. **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 your child to be at home, then they should be.
2. 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 an adult
3. **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 child/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.

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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.

Additionally, if workers think they fall within the critical categories above they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

We ask that you contact us today if you feel that you fall into one of the Key Categories and will be sending your child to school on Monday. This is to ensure we have sufficient staffing for the number of children. If staff levels fall too far, then we may still have to partially, or fully, shut St. John's, even to children of Key Workers. Therefore, it is vital to

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follow government guidelines which advise, "That if it is at all possible for your child to be at home, then they should be."

We are grateful for the work of teachers and workers in St. John's and across all schools in Southport for continuing to provide for the children of the other critical workers of our country. It is an essential part of our national effort to combat this disease. We shall ensure we keep you updated but in the meantime, please continue to keep safe and follow guidelines.

Kind Regards

Mr P Thomson
Headteacher