

Whitnash Primary School

'Learning, growing and succeeding together'

Headteacher
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Latest Information For Schools

Dear Parents / Carers,

You will have seen the message from the Prime Minister on Wednesday that schools in the country will close to most families. We know that many of you are asking for information on what that means for your children and how they will receive their education. We are now in a position to give some clarity as to how we will move forwards.

Government guidance is for all children to be kept away from schools and early years settings unless a parent meets one of the following criteria. Schools will challenge the parents of any child who attends if they are not defined as eligible to do so and will not provide them with provision.

- That one of their parents is defined as a key worker according to government guidance. Government guidance is also that parents who are defined as key workers should only send their children to school if they do not have a safe alternative. The list of those whose work is regarded as critical to the COVID-19 response can be found [here](#):
- That the child is classed as being 'vulnerable', including those 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 an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

We appreciate the disruption that this will cause you. However, everyone has a role to play in stopping the spread of the Coronavirus. The Government has stressed that schools and early years settings (referred to simply as 'schools' throughout the rest of this briefing) have a key role to play, having kept them open as normal for as long as was practicably possible.

There will be staff ensuring that the schools remain safe and functional.

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Free school meals will be provided to all eligible pupils and information about how to access this will follow.

Every day, data will be collected in the morning so that we have a very clear picture of who is in school and, if any child is not attending that should be, we need to know where they are. That is obviously a critical piece of work if we are to safely track some of our most vulnerable children.

That will be our starting point. As time passes and the situation evolves, we will be scaling down the number of schools open and the transport network. As this begins to take place, we will be communicating which schools will remain open as the number of settings reduces. As time goes on it will be likely that many children who are eligible to attend will be at a different location than their usual school.

Staff who will initially be present in schools will be scaled back to working remotely. Where fit, staff will be expected to be supporting the school's distance learning approach. **Staff who are not supervising at the schools that remain open will be teaching online so that children continue to receive the best education possible.**

For all parents, we would also ask that you ensure that you follow government guidance on hygiene as stringently as possible.

We understand how this will affect the children and you, as families, and while we empathise, we have to be firm in the application of government guidelines if we are to keep your children safe and help stop the spread of Coronovirus. Your essential co-operation is appreciated.

We very much appreciate your understanding at this challenging and difficult time.

We send our kindest regards and best wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Donna Ellison

Headteacher