

**Dear Parents/Carers,**

I hope you are all managing to keep well with your families under the present circumstances. We now have further guidance from the Government to share with you.

We have continued to work hard to do as the Government has asked, turning the school into a childcare facility for vulnerable children and for the children of key workers for next week. This task has been made extremely challenging with the lack of guidance until today from the Government. Therefore, this means, that the transition to a childcare facility will need to be phased over the first two days as it is impossible for us to know how many children that we need to care for beforehand.

Monday – admission for key worker children and those with a social worker and/or a EHCP.

Tuesday – admission for children from other families in need.

**Limited Childcare Provision – Key Workers**

At midnight last night the Government released further details about the use of schools. It clearly states that 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.**

The children of key workers whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response, who need childcare on Monday will be admitted at 8:45am. If you are a key worker (please see the list below) and you require childcare but not on Monday, it is important that you still come to school before 3pm on Monday and register your child. We urgently need this information to be able to plan. If you are in self isolation and unable to come to school, please phone and let us know. We will require you to complete admission papers at least 24 hours before you use our childcare facility. The Government has not stated as was anticipated that both parents need to be key workers, however it does state that the school should only be used if children cannot be cared for at home. This facility is available whilst you are at work, it is not expected that your child will require care everyday if you are not working. It will also be available to you during the Easter holidays.

The Government states that, **‘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 when deciding to use the school as childcare:

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 educational provision will be available for them.

- 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.
- 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.

Key workers are defined as:

<b><u>Health and Social Care Workers</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doctors</li> <li>Nurses</li> <li>Midwives</li> <li>Paramedics</li> <li>Social Workers</li> <li>Care workers</li> <li>Support and specialist staff required to maintain the sector</li> <li>Health and Social Supply chain</li> </ul>	<b><u>Utilities, Communication and Financial Services</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Essential Financial Provision</li> <li>Oil, Gas, Electricity and water workers</li> <li>IT and data infrastructure</li> <li>Civil Nuclear workers</li> <li>Chemicals workers</li> <li>Telecommunications workers</li> <li>Postal service and delivery</li> <li>Payment providers</li> <li>Waste disposal sectors</li> </ul>	<b><u>Key Public Services</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Justice system workers</li> <li>Religious staff</li> <li>Charities delivering key frontline services</li> <li>Workers who manage the deceased</li> <li>Journalists and public service broadcasters</li> </ul>
<b><u>Local and National Government</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of COVID-19 response</li> <li>Delivery of essential public services, eg payment of benefits</li> </ul>	<b><u>Necessary Goods (Food, Hygiene, Veterinary medicines)</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery</li> <li>Those essential to the delivery of other key goods</li> </ul>	<b><u>Public Safety and National Transport</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police and Support Staff</li> <li>Ministry of Defence</li> <li>Armed Forces Personnel</li> <li>Fire and Rescue</li> <li>National Crime Agency</li> <li>Border Security</li> <li>Prison and Probation Staff</li> </ul>
<b><u>Transport (Passenger and Freight)</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air, Road, Water, Rail</li> </ul>	<b><u>Education and Childcare</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nursery Staff</li> <li>Teaching staff</li> <li>Social Workers</li> <li>Specialist education professionals</li> </ul>	

### **Limited Childcare Provision – Vulnerable Children**

The Government has also clarified that:

**Vulnerable children include children 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.**

From 10am on Monday, children with an EHCP and who have a social worker will be admitted. This provision is available during term time only.

On Tuesday, if we have the capacity, we will offer childcare to other families in need. We will contact you on Monday if you meet this threshold. This will also be available term time only.

### **Where to come on the first morning?**

All children must be accompanied by their parents/carers and should come to the main reception area, please remember that we are only allowing one person at a time in the school reception area, so please queue outside standing 1 metre apart, until it is your turn to enter. We will process admission arrangements as quickly as possible and will provide you with information about how the childcare will run. **A child must not be sent to school on their own.**

### **Free School Meals**

As stated in my letter yesterday, the government has said that they will be issuing food vouchers to families that are entitled to free school meals. Until this comes into operation, we will provide daily 'grab bags' for your children's lunch next week. On the second week of closure, we will be sending you a £20 voucher to use in Aldi. The office will have rung you today to check if you are going to collect a lunch next week. If you haven't spoken to the office today and will need a 'grab bag', please ring the office by 9:30am on Monday to order one. If your family is in isolation, it is very important that you do not leave your house, so please arrange for a neighbour/friend to collect one for you.

'Grab bags' will be outside on a table by the school reception area from **11:30am** for you to collect. You will not need to come into school.

### **Keeping in Touch during the Closure**

Whilst the school is closed, we will keep in touch with you using our Twitter page, [@windmilllead](#), so please follow us. We will also send you out a text message every week during term times. If you change your contact details, please let us know so that you keep up to date with our messages. If you need to contact us, please ring on 0115 9150195 or email us at [admin@windmillacademy.co.uk](mailto:admin@windmillacademy.co.uk).

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child during the closure you can ring Children and Families Direct (Social Care) directly on 0115 8764800, ring the school to ask to speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Colvin, Miss Aggus or Ms Shrestha).

I will be posting homework projects on our school website at [www.windmillacademy.co.uk](http://www.windmillacademy.co.uk). If you click on the 'Children' heading and then onto the 'Homework' subheading you will find homework learning projects in year groups. These will be updated weekly during our usual term times. We have also sent out learning packs for your children to do at home along with an exercise book and a reading book. There are many activities in these packs for your children to do and suggestions of great websites they can use. We will also be producing packs again for your children during the closure that you can collect from school. We will inform you when these are available by text.

### **Finally**

As I have stated before, we will do whatever we can to support the Windmill community during this difficult time but please be aware that a significant number of staff are also ill at the moment or are in self isolation. To run this childcare provision, we still need catering staff, midday staff, first aiders, office staff, site staff, senior leadership as well as teachers and teaching assistants. If we find ourselves in the position that we do not have enough staff required to run the childcare facility safely, we may be unable to continue to the extent that we hope we will be able to. I sincerely hope this does not happen, but feel it is important to make you aware of the complexities of running this offer during this very challenging time.

The staff, governors and the central team at L.E.A.D. are all thinking of you and your families during this difficult time and know that as a community we will get through this together. Please stay safe and follow the government guidelines, they are there to protect you and your families. Along with this letter, we have sent a lovely rainbow painting for your child to put up in their room to remind them that we are thinking of them and a letter especially for them.

Teresa Shrestha

Headteacher