



Highwood Primary School,
Fairwater Drive,
Woodley,
READING,
Berkshire.
RG5 3JE

Tel: 0118 926 5493

Email: admin@highwood.wokingham.sch.uk
www.highwood.wokingham.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mr M Hickey BA(Ed), PE QTS

March 19, 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

As outlined yesterday, the government has announced that as of Friday afternoon, schools will be closed for the majority of pupils until further notice. What the government are *actually* expecting schools to do, is to operate a partial closure by still providing a safe setting for particular groups of children to attend. This partial closure will ensure that the key workers that are keeping the country functioning can still go to work. So far, the key workers that we are aware of are as follows:

- NHS staff – providing the vital health care that the community needs
- Emergency services
- School staff – this would include all staff that are required in order for a school to function
- Delivery drivers to keep the shops filled with food

The full list of key workers has not yet been announced, so it is unknown at this stage as to how many children at Highwood this will affect. We have sent texts out to parents to ask you that if you fall into one of the key worker groups known so far, to get in contact with the school as to whether your children need to be in to school in order to support your key worker role.

If this list of key workers is produced after this email is sent out (I am writing this at 5pm) then please do contact the school so we can make effective plans for Monday.

The message shared with staff, is that If schools completely close, then the parents of children who fall into these key worker categories will either have to stay at home or require grandparents (who may be some of the most vulnerable in our society) to provide childcare. If the NHS reduces in capacity, then this global pandemic could put more lives at risk. Schools have a vital role to play in keeping the key workers available to attend work and keep our country functioning properly and Highwood staff are keen to play their part.

At this point what we know is:

- School will open for those children in the specific groups mentioned from Monday
- All staff that are available will be in work on Monday. Our workforce may be scaled down and flexible working hours implemented, so that we safeguard our staff while still providing a setting for the children and families who need it.
- The government have asked schools to open during the Easter period. We are in communication with Funtastic Kids to be able to secure additional places for our families, so that we can remain open during the Easter break. As a school, we could then potentially fund places for our key worker parents to add an additional layer of support.

School attendance figures for 19/03/2020 were as follows:

Pupil attendance = 60.1%	31.3% in isolation (109 children)	8.6% general school absences (30 children)
Staff attendance = 81.5%	10.8% in isolation (7 adults)	3.1% general school absences (2 adults)

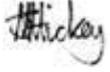
We also have 4.6% of staff (3 adults) who we are shielding from the virus as they fall into the high-risk categories.

Caterlink

Jacket Potatoes will continue to be the hot meal option due to limited staffing capacity.

For those of you who I may not see for a while, please do keep in touch so we know how your children are getting on. My communication will continue but the frequency will reduce. I look forward to things returning to normal. Stay safe.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Hickey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'M' and a long tail on the 'y'.

Matt Hickey
Headteacher
Highwood Primary School