



20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to start by thanking everyone for all their support over the past few weeks during what has been a particularly challenging time. This includes our staff, our children, our parents/carers and local communities.

During this period, staff across our Trust have worked tirelessly, remained positive and have pulled together to ensure that your children have remained safe and happy in their schools.

Following Government guidance released this week, our schools will be officially closed, but will remain open for vulnerable children and those who have parents and carers that are 'key workers' from Monday 23rd March 2020.

The Government have issued a report this morning which clarifies who is classed as a key worker (please see link below):

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

It is important to note that the latest guidance states that many parents working in the defined sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home - every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

Yesterday evening, you will have received a text message asking you to complete a survey if you live in a household where both parents/carers, or single parents may be classed as a key worker. The purpose of this survey was to gather as much information as we could to enable us to begin making arrangements quickly so that we are able to cater for these families and children.

If you did not complete this survey and you feel the statement issued by the Government this morning now applies to you and your household – you can access this survey via the link on the text message sent yesterday or the link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PHMATKeyWorkerSurvey>

To ensure that we are fully supporting our country, please ensure you are following these key principles:

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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

Please see the link below for frequently asked questions which has been provided by the Government:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Thank you in advance for your support in these coming weeks and we will endeavour to ensure all of you are kept updated as the situation progresses via our website and text messaging services.

Yours sincerely



Amarjit Cheema OBE

Chief Executive Officer