



**Langdon
Primary
School**

19 March 2020

Dear parents and carers

Re: Coronavirus/Covid-19

Due to the recent announcement from the Prime Minister that all UK schools must close due to the spread of Coronavirus, we are writing to officially notify you of the closure of Langdon Primary School with effect from 3.00pm on Friday 20 March 2020.

At the time of writing, schools have had no information from central government beyond what was said by the Secretary of State for Education yesterday evening. I am writing therefore, to provide you with the best information I have at the current time, further updates will be sent to you as and when I am able. If you wish to read the full statement from the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, it can be found at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-colleges-and-early-years-settings-to-close>

This is an extremely difficult situation which impacts us all, but we understand that the closure of schools is necessary to ensure the safety, health and well-being of everyone and prevent further spread of the virus.

School Closure and Limited Access

During the school closure period, we will run the school with a skeleton staff. Most teachers will work from home and will be contactable for the majority of you by email should you need help or advice with your child's learning.

Vulnerable children and children of key workers will continue to be able to come into school as normal. **Please note that will be only be able to make provision for pupils who fall into these two categories.** There will be no exceptions in the interests of fairness, consistency and achieving the purpose of school closures which is minimising social contact.

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those with educational health and care plans.

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HEADTEACHER

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I do not yet have confirmation of who key workers are from central government but recent examples cited in the press of the key workers who need to be able to go to work include:

- NHS staff
- Police
- Prison officers
- Teachers
- Firefighters
- Those in the caring professions for elderly or vulnerable adults
- Supermarket delivery drivers

Until we have the definitive list from the government (it was due to schools at 1300hours today but as yet schools, and indeed Local Authorities have not received it) do not assume you are a key worker. I will forward the list to you as soon as I have it and you can then use it to inform your communications with us.

In order to plan staffing levels, I need to know, **IN ADVANCE**, which children will be in school and there is a response slip attached to this letter which I would ask all parents who think their child should be attending school under the current guidelines to complete and return to school as soon as possible. Sending this information, detailing the everything required on the response slip, by email is fine; please use the office address which is admin@langdon.kent.sch.uk. If you do not have email then please speak to me directly this week or contact me by telephone, leaving a message if necessary and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Upon receipt of your responses, we will assess the validity of your request and confirm with you attendance arrangements and establish our daily attendance registers of pupils. If you request that your child attends and this changes for any reason, please contact us as soon as possible to let us know.

If Langdon staffing levels fall, our collaboration partner school, Green Park School, have offered to care for Langdon children at their school and this may be the centre that you need to get your child to if necessary. We will liaise by telephone and email with you if this happens.

There has been a request by the Secretary of State for Education that schools remain open for the children of key workers and for vulnerable pupils during the Easter holidays. At present, I am looking at how this might be achieved but it is likely that we will join with other local schools and that your child may have to attend at another site for this period.

If you have a child who is considered to be vulnerable or you are a key worker but do not wish your child to attend school because you can organise adequate care for them at home then this is fine. I would ask you to let us know this information too for staffing purposes.

During the time in school children attending should bring their home learning pack with them to work on. We will provide some additional learning activities but I must stress that the quality of education on offer cannot be identical to that which we provide under normal circumstances. When working with a handful of children, potentially of vastly differing ages and abilities, it is hard to replicate what happens in the usual classroom. It is perhaps worth noting that the Secretary of State for

Education has been clear that this is an entirely different role for schools and their staff. It is primarily about care, not education.

Free School Meals

For pupils entitled to Free School Meals (FSM), we are mindful that you must not be left without provision for your child to have a mid-day meal. I would suggest that if able to parents provide a packed lunch for their child if they are attending school. If your child is entitled to FSM and you require support with the provision of food, in school or at home, please indicate this on the response form and I will make individual arrangements with you.

Home Learning

Our staff have worked hard behind the scenes to devise learning plans to ensure that your child still has the opportunity to continue their studies at home. All pupils are expected to undertake the work in the learning pack and current guidance states that pupils should remain at home, or in another appropriate indoor place, during school hours, taking suitable breaks for their general well-being. Please contact me directly if you did not receive a learning pack yesterday or through the post by Friday if your child was not in school on Wednesday 18 March 2020. Staff are currently preparing work for the first two weeks after the Easter holiday in case schools remain closed. In addition to this, we are in the process of setting up a closed YouTube channel where children will be able to access dance and/or yoga videos, story time with their teachers and other learning activities that will help to keep them learning at home.

Attendance and Absence

Throughout the period of closure all pupils will be given a 'Y' coding for absence. This is the code that is used for circumstances beyond anyone's control. We will not be recording any illness, medical appointments or any other circumstance that means your child is unable to attend to their learning on any one day, so please do not feel that you need to inform us if your child is unwell during the period whilst schools are shut. For those pupils who have been off school due to circumstances linked to Coronavirus, they have also been Y coded.

Learning and Progress Meetings

The school will be closed to parents on Monday 23 March 2020; Learning and Progress meetings will not now take place. The government has suspended end of Key Stage SAT assessments in primary schools and the publication of associated performance tables for this year, so our Year 2 and Year 6 pupils will not be doing their end of year assessments. In addition, the Year 1 phonics check and the Year 4 multiplication tables check have also been suspended. We will however, continue to give you our assessment of where your children are and the teachers are going to do this in the form of the Annual Report to Parents rather than the mid-year Continuous Assessment Report that you would normally receive at the Learning and Progress meeting, just in case we do not open again before the end of the year. The Annual Report will come to you in May - I will communicate the exact date nearer the time.

Residential Visits

Sadly, I have today made a decision which will not be popular with parents or children. We have cancelled all residential visits this year - Year 2 Duke of York's Royal Military School, Year 3/4

Swattenden and Year 5/6 Manor Adventure. In light of the uncertainty about school closures in the next term, about the impact and spread of the virus and in line with most head teachers in the district, I felt that we needed to cancel now and see if we can seek reimbursement. I will contact you with more details about this in the near future. We are all disappointed about this course of action because we know how important these trips are to you all but we do need to ensure your safety and in a different setting, I cannot guarantee this at this time.

Safeguarding

There may be need for parents or carers, pupils or staff to contact the school urgently about safeguarding issues other pressing or safety or well being matters during the school closure. I would ask you to use lpaylorsutton@langdon.kent.sch.uk or ekeem@langdon.kent.sch.uk or the school telephone number to contact myself or Mrs Keem; we are both designated safeguarding leads for the school. We will then contact you at our first opportunity to try to help.

We very much regret that we have had to put these arrangements in place and thank you for your understanding and patience and for the kind and encouraging messages we've received this week as we have dealt with yourselves and your children. Our aim is always to do the best for our children and it feels hard at the moment as we feel our way into this new arrangement. We will, however, get through this challenge and we look forward to working with the Langdon children and parents back in the school environment, hopefully in the near future.

As soon as we have an official date to re-open, we will communicate this with you via email and the school website. Until then, we would like to offer our very best wishes and hope that anybody affected by the virus makes a speedy recovery.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Paylor Sutton
Head Teacher