



24 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

School closure and support from school: an update

I sincerely hope that my letter finds you safe and well.

This is a time of unprecedented national concern. The actions that the Government have taken in recent days are to ensure the reduction and halting of the spread of the COVID-19 virus and in order to help save lives. We are adjusting as a school, a community and as a nation to new ways of living and working that will affect us for some weeks and months.

Keeping safe

The instructions – not advice – from our Government are very clear. For the foreseeable future, people (adults and children) **must stay at home** except for:

1. Shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
2. One form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle (alone or with members of your household).
3. Any medical need or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
4. Travelling to and from work, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.

In terms of schooling, the guidance issued clarifies that *'If you work in a critical sector or your child has been identified as vulnerable, you can continue to take your children to school'*.

The guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>.

Please contact us directly via keyworkers@thevalley.staracademies.org if you want to discuss with us further how you can access this provision. However, I must stress that our starting point is that children should **stay at home** unless there are exceptional reasons as outlined in the guidance.

Since January, I have been using a phrase in school - **collective responsibility, individual accountability** – and in our current national crisis it takes on an even more important meaning in that each and every one of us needs to play our part in doing the right thing – taking no risks and challenging any actions or behaviours that are contrary to the best interests of others.

In particular, this means **not letting your child out on the streets to meet with their friends**. This is not allowed, is against all the Government health advice and the police will now take action to prevent this.



Keeping in touch

As a school we have set up a process for each family to be contacted by phone at least once per week to help ensure we know how you and our pupils are doing as well as offering any practical support we can. Given the current advice from Government, we will not make home visits.

Keep learning

If you have yet to get the work pack for your child please contact the school via email at info@thevalley.staracademies.org or ring the school on 01706 873896 to arrange to pick one up. We are also looking to store the work on our school website. I will send out a text in the near future with a link to where it is stored. We will be adding to this over time and looking at ways we can provide online lessons in the coming weeks.

Keeping up the provision of free school meals

A text was sent to all parents around 8pm on 22 March 2020 with a link to a letter outlining what is going to happen going forward if your child is entitled to free school meals.

The letter can be found on our school website via this link:

<https://www.thevalleyleadershipacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Coronavirus-parent-letter-FSM-230320.pdf>

It is very important that we have an up to date email address for you so that we can ensure you are able to access the Tesco vouchers that will be provided. The detail is outlined in the letter including the email address you should send your details to.

Keeping in regular contact

I am very aware that continuing to keep in contact with you is important at this time. We will be using a range of means to do that, including texting you, placing information on our Facebook and Twitter feeds and placing information on our school website.

In addition, as I've said already earlier in this letter, we will make contact via phone to keep in touch. You can also keep in touch with us by ringing school on 01706 873 896 or via our general school email account info@thevalley.staracademies.org.

Please observe all the Government guidance that has been given.

Stay at home. Stay safe. Look after yourself and your loved ones.

With all best wishes,



Kieran Larkin

Interim Executive Principal