

20 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As you will be aware, the government has made the decision to close all schools as part of their plan to delay the spread of coronavirus. The purpose of this measure is to limit large groups of people mixing together where they could pass on the virus. The most recent government 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.

It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other **educational establishments remain safe places for children.** But the fewer children making the journey to school and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home. 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](#).

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the link below. 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 follow 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.

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed on the link below, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision:

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



If you require the support highlighted above please contact keyworkersupport@uak.email and we will contact you to discuss details.

Stay safe and look out for each other!

Yours sincerely

Jon Skurr

Head of School