



8th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. I understand the anxiety and frustration that many families are feeling and we appreciate all of your kind words and continued support, patience and understanding, both for the team here in school, as well as across the whole school community. I hope this letter and the information within it, serves as a useful update for you and your family.

As of earlier this week the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson and then the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, has announced a revision to the plans for how schools will manage the start of the Spring term to help further control the current rapid spread of COVID-19.

We received news of the Government's plan at exactly the same time as the rest of the country during the Prime Minister's announcement at 8pm on Monday evening. We immediately began to consider our plans - as we have said before, we like yourselves, want nothing more than to have children back in school learning and socialising with their friends, as and when it is safer to do so.

What has the Government asked schools to do?

On Monday evening this week schools were asked by the Government to partially close from 8am the following day. This partial closure means that all primary schools, with immediate effect, until at least February half-term, will only continue to be open for children classed as vulnerable or those from families of Critical Workers. This includes;

- Children whose parents/carers are classed as Critical Workers – The Government definition of these groups can be accessed [here](#).
- Those classed as what the Secretary of State described as vulnerable children. These would include those who have a social worker and those with EHCPs.- The Government definition of these groups can be accessed [here](#).

What should I do if I feel that my child is entitled to a place as I am a Critical Worker or my child would be classed as Vulnerable?

There is no automatic entitlement to a place in school. Please consider if your role is critical to the Covid-19 response. Even if you are a Critical Worker yourself, please ask whether you have ANY other alternative options. Sending your child to school should be an absolute last resort; every child who can safely be cared for at home should be if we are to tackle the spread of this virus together once again.

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If you feel that you are one of the 'Critical Workers' or your child would be classed as 'vulnerable' by the Government, and need your child to attend school, as you have no other way of keeping them safe, please use the link below to book a place for your child.

We now have bookings for places next week, but from next week, we must insist that bookings are made via this link only and must be in by noon on the Friday of the week before the place is required, to allow us to organize appropriate staffing levels. eg for a place week beginning Monday 18th, bookings need to be completed via this link by noon on Friday 15th, at the latest.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=hk1fE4thnEqFmfCMJ7T4cemx8-f1th9CvHJ2ujAjC6xUNFVXR1NMR1VXR1RSSVE1RFkwVzZGRjIHRy4u>

If you believe that you work in one of the critical sectors listed in the document (link above) **we ask you to provide us with that confirmation from your employer and your weekly rota /shifts** in order for us to provide a place for your child in school.

Please email the evidence above to yewtree@knowsley.gov.uk stating your child's name, Year Group, the name of your employer and a phone number of the company you work for.

If you feel that your child may be within the vulnerable category, and we haven't already contacted you, please give school a call on 01514778950 or send us an email to yewtree@knowsley.gov.uk

At any point, should numbers in our school be too high and we believe that both children and staff are at increased risk because of this, then we may introduce a 'tiered' system for allocating places. All places will then be reviewed and considered in the light of each family's particular circumstance / job roles etc.

What are the arrangements for my child if they are given a place in school following my request through the link above ?

If you have been allocated a place in school for next week, you will have already been informed of this.

Please note the arrangements below for PODS entering and exiting school.

	Drop Off time	Allocated gate	Collection Time
EYFS POD (Reception & Nursery)	08:45	EYFS	15:00
KS1 POD (Y1 & 2)	08:45	Main gate off The Avenue	15:00
Lower KS2 POD (Y3 & 4)	08:50	Main gate off The Avenue	15:05

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Upper KS2 POD (Y5 & 6)	08:45	Main gate off Wood Road	15:00
Ash POD	08:50	Main gate off Wood Road	14:30
Birch POD	09:00	Main gate off Wood Road	14:40
Cedar POD	09:05	Main gate off Wood Road	14:50

As you can see from the drop off and pick up arrangements above, we will continue to stagger timings and locations to ensure social distancing can be maintained. It is necessary for all parents and carers to follow government guidance for the Tier allocated (currently Tier 3 for Liverpool City Region) for the safety of all of our children and families. This includes us insisting upon:

- **adults wearing a face mask at all times when dropping off and collecting their child**
- **maintaining social distancing (that's a 2m distance between you and other people), limiting interactions with others at the gates.**
- **following the staggered drop off / pick up times at school.**

Importantly, if your child, or a member of your household displays any of the symptoms (high temperature, new or persistent cough or loss of taste or smell), you must stay at home and book a test through www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or ring 119.

Testing is available across the borough for people who are not displaying symptoms. COVID-19 is easily transmitted from person to person so identifying people who have the virus but don't have symptoms is vital. The test centre at Volair Leisure Centre in Halewood is open from 9am until 6pm Monday to Friday and 10am until 4pm at weekends. No appointment is needed and your result is normally turned around in 30 minutes.

If your child is entitled to Free School Meals, they will receive a school dinner as usual, during the school day. Otherwise, please ensure that your child brings their packed lunch and water to school each day.

All children in school should be wearing full school uniform. However, as the weather has been particularly cold lately, please bring hats, gloves or an extra layer to school if you feel this is needed on such cold days.



What if my child/children are not entitled to a place in school as they are not children of Key Workers or within the Government's 'Vulnerable' category?

For all other children, we will be providing a remote learning offer, which matches the current curriculum for their year group and your children's progress through their work will be monitored and checked by their teachers.

Where can I access Remote Learning?

The portal for Remote Learning can be found on the school, as well as on your child's class page on Class Dojo. On our website, select Pupils > Class Pages> (the name of your Child's Class eg Elm) > Remote Learning.

We have designed Remote Learning to be closely aligned to in school provision with access to resources that provide both teaching as well as learning for your child.

A Remote Learning Overview for the week will be posted at the beginning of each week with hyperlinked materials. No printing is required; all activities can be completed on paper.

Please take a picture of your child's work and then send them to your child's teacher on Class Dojo.

As is usually the case, Class Dojo (and the links to your child's remote learning) can be accessed on all devices eg mobile phones, tablets, Ipads, laptops and PC's. It can also be accessed through your child's XBOX or Playstation consoles. We have contacted all families this week, regarding access to these devices in the home, but please contact us if you require any further support with this.

How do I communicate with my child's class teacher?

Please use Class Dojo to communicate with your child's teacher, as well as using it to upload your child's work. This will enable staff to support and review your child's progress and give feedback where necessary and appropriate in a manageable way. No work is to be brought to school on paper.

If you experience any difficulties with the Remote Learning activities, please contact your child's class teacher on Class Dojo or call the school office. The teacher will return your call as soon as they are reasonably able to do so when they are not teaching.

School staff will also be checking on the pupils' wellbeing and providing pastoral support where required. Therefore, as in the last National Lockdown, we will be in touch with all of our families via phone calls on a weekly basis, alongside Class Dojo. We are currently exploring ways of teachers digitally connecting face-to-face with the children in their classes, and will be in touch soon with an update on this.



This is how we can work together to allow the high quality educational offer to continue;

The school will:

- Provide a range of curriculum subjects planned by class teachers
- Provide daily lessons, activities and learning opportunities
- Provide feedback and praise for work that is submitted
- Encourage each child to engage with their learning remotely
- Communicate with families
- Provide support and advice to children and families when it is needed
- Continue to support the children's well-being through communication and activities

I will (child):

- Engage with my daily remote learning
- Post my progress
- Try my best with each lesson and activity
- Ask for help when needed
- Continue to...

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I will (Parent/Carer):

- Support my child in accessing their remote learning through Class Dojo each week day
- Encourage my child to engage with their remote learning
- Praise and celebrate my child's online learning
- Support my child posting their progress
- Communicate with teachers if support is needed



Our school is committed to supporting our families and children during these difficult times, so please look after yourselves and each other and if you need any additional advice or guidance, then please let us know.

In these circumstances, rumours on social media and online news outlets can sometimes cause confusion. To ensure reliable and clear communication from the school, our website yewtree@knowsley.gov.uk and Class Dojo will be used as the official method of communication.

Thank you for your continued support

Take care,

Mrs R O'Hanlon

Principal

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