

19 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

School Closure: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Yesterday evening the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education announced that as of this Friday, 20th March, all schools - including ours - in England and Wales would close until further notice due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I am sure most of you will have questions and whilst we do not have all the answers at the moment, we will share with you what we do know and keep you updated as and when we receive new information.

In line with the announcement we will close the school at the end of the school day tomorrow, Friday 20 March. As yet we do not know when we will re-open. We will inform you of this date when we know.

This decision has not been taken lightly and we have provision in place to minimise disruption to your child's learning. However, the health and safety of our students and their families is our priority at this time.

We have been planning for this eventuality and below you will find the details necessary to continue your child's education:

Children of Key Workers

As of Monday, 23 March 2020, we have been told that schools should, where possible, create childcare provision for the essential key workers as identified by the government. At the time of writing this letter we do not know who these key workers are. However, when the list is published, we will ask you if you qualify for this limited provision. This will not be a normal school day. It is a basic childcare provision. Please note, many of our colleagues are self-isolating and have their own families that need their support in this difficult time so we have to establish the staff levels that are available to us on Monday. Once we know all this information we will communicate if/how this child care provision will work.

In order to plan for this we are asking that should you be one of the essential and listed key workers you complete the form that is available on the Home Learning page and submit it no later than 3pm on Friday 20 March 2020. You will be able to book your child in for morning and/or afternoon sessions. It is important that we know which children are attending school each day. The form will cover the two week period leading up to the Easter holidays. We will contact those of you who access this form to confirm whether or not the childcare provision will be available in our academy.

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Outwood Grange Academies Trust, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 06995649.

Registered office address: Potovens Lane, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2PF.

VAT number: 158 2720 04. Outwood Grange Academies Trust is an exempt charity.

A list of Directors' names is open to inspection at our registered office.

Vulnerable Children

The school may also open to vulnerable children, dependent upon staffing levels. These families will be contacted by assigned contacts in school to discuss if they require this very limited provision.

Home Learning

We have previously communicated with you to explain what the process will be for setting work for students during the enforced closure. Google Classroom is the means by which teachers will set work for their classes. In order for parents/carers to support their children at home, we have created a [Home Learning webpage](#) which provides you with guidance on how to access Google Classroom with your child.

To access this information, click on the red button which is located on all school websites titled 'School Closure'. This will take you to a dedicated [school closure landing page](#) which will then direct you to primary and secondary information. Clicking on the secondary button will take you to further information about how to access home learning for your child.

All students have been shown how to access Google Classroom and we have checked that they have their login and password details.

We are mindful that the Home Learning we are setting will require access to the internet. Please discuss with your child how they will manage their data usage on their mobile phones, should this be the device they use to access work.

We trust that students will continue to be conscientious and complete their work on time and to the same high standards as they would in school and use this as an opportunity to have an even more enhanced focus on their studies.

Free School Meals

We are aware that some families will struggle more than usual at this difficult time. For those students entitled to free meals, a free packed lunch or a hot grab and go bag will be available. Students accessing this service should attend the academy via the main reception entrance on a daily basis **between the hours of 12.00pm-12.30pm only** to collect their packed lunch. Students who are **entitled to free school meals and are self-isolating** will be able to collect grab bags directly from a local authority distribution centre, details of which will be shared via SMS text and social media in due course.

We have provided a list of venues where you may be able to access food supplies, without cost, please find this attached.

Examinations

We know very little at the moment except that the Secretary of State for Education has confirmed that exams will not go ahead this academic year. The government states that they will work with the exam bodies to ensure that children get the qualifications they need.

This morning, on television, we heard the Minister further state that guidance will be issued tomorrow (Friday, 20 March 2020) on how exam grades will be awarded - when/if we get this update then we will let you know. We know this is frustrating and upsetting but we will do everything we can to support our students.

Reporting Confirmed Coronavirus Cases

If your child or someone who lives in your household receives a confirmed diagnosis of Coronavirus, we are asking that you let us know this by completing the form that you can find on the 'Home Learning' page titled 'Reporting Coronavirus'.

At this time we appreciate that this may cause some inconvenience in terms of providing childcare and ensuring that your child is supervised and is kept safe during the normal school working hours. It is important at this time that you manage the interactions of your child with other students and monitor their health, taking appropriate action should you feel they are displaying any of the symptoms of COVID-19. Please can you continue to remind your child of the importance of personal hygiene.

Updates

All updates regarding school closure and subsequent reopening will be published on official school social media accounts, websites and on the Home Learning page: <https://homelearning.outwood.com/>.

If you have any concerns during this unprecedented period of time then please contact the school using the 'Contact Us' page of the school website. We will endeavour to respond as soon as we are able to.

The school will use the text messaging service to contact you about when the school will reopen and arrangements for your child to return to school.

Finally, we will follow government guidelines with regard to re-opening the academy, but we hope we can do this as soon as possible and we look forward to welcoming the students back into the academy. Once again thank you for your support and understanding at this challenging time and we wish you and your families well during this difficult period.

Yours faithfully



Ms Seana Rice
Principal

Support for Families

We are aware that across all of our communities some families will struggle more than usual at this difficult time. We have pulled together a list of venues where you may be able to access food supplies, without cost.

Families / individuals will need a voucher to be able to use any of the venues listed. Vouchers are available from professionals, which include **Social Workers and GPs**.

At times, it may also be possible to attend the **Churches / Venues** listed and speak with someone on the site to help you access a voucher.

The Citizens Advice Bureau in any local authority can issue vouchers enabling individuals / families access to food supplies from the venues.

Thirteen Housing Group distribute vouchers. Call 0300 1111000 (Central Office) and then ask to be directed to The Neighbourhood Co-ordinator.

Redcar & Cleveland

Friday 11am – 1.30pm	All Saints Church Centre, South Avenue, Dormanstown
Thursday 11am – 1.30pm	St Peter's Church, Lord Street, Redcar
Friday 8.30am – 1pm	St George's Church, Spencer Road, Normanby
Thursday 1pm – 3pm	Brotton Methodist Church, High Street, Brotton
Wednesday 10.30am – 12.30pm	South Bank Baptist Church, Redcar Road East, South Bank

- For further advice, call Redcar and Cleveland Council - Redcar and Cleveland House, Kirkleatham Street, Redcar. Phone 01642 774774.