



Dear Parents and Carers,

Guidance for schools remaining open from Monday was posted in the early hours this morning (see link below). The government has made it clear that all parents are to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. That is why it is important to underline that Leasowes and Barnfields must remain a safe place for our children. We will also need to take account of both: a) the latest government scientific advice on the proportion of pupils that it is advisable to maintain direct support for in order to maintain efforts to delay the spread of the virus. At present this has been set by the government as a **maximum of 20% of the school population** and b) the number of staff available to work. **This may require us to prioritise which pupils receive an offer, according to greatest need. Only children receiving an offer will be allowed into school from Monday.**

The guidance is clear **'If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.'** My view as your Headteacher, based on the guidance, is that all parents should endeavour to keep their children at home safely. The fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread across Leasowes and Barnfields and the wider Stafford Community. Outside of school parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way that can continue to spread the virus.

However for parents who are working in a critical sector and cannot make any alternative arrangements, our school staff are committed to providing childcare whilst you are at work where possible. The Government have made it clear this week that this is **no longer Education but 'Emergency Childcare'** and, **although this is not the norm for us, we will not be providing normal schooling during these hours.** We are also committed to keeping our extended hours from 7:45am to 6pm to enable you to keep the country operating, this will be paid for in the normal way. Therefore, if you think your work is **critical to the COVID-19 response**, or you work in one of the **critical sectors**, you should first confirm with your employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, your specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service. If it is, then please can you complete the reply slip below as well as what care you will require **on the days that you are in work** in order that we can begin to co-ordinate our response. This can be done by email or by contacting the school office. **We will do all that we can to contact you before the end of the day to let you know if we can offer you a place.**

The situation is changing by the hour and as I write this letter we have still received no official information or guidance from the DfE or the LA. Things therefore may well change during the day and if this is the case then we will contact you immediately. If parents of key workers do not require support immediately but circumstances change we will of course be ready to support you if we can.

In summary, the scientific guidance is clear the fewer children we have in school each day the greater chance we have of limiting the chance of the virus spreading. These are testing times and it is our civic and moral duty to keep our community safe, whilst at the same time keeping our critical services operating.

The overwhelming gratitude and support that we have received from so many parents over the past few days has been very moving, these messages really are appreciated. Thank you.

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

Below is the information that we require:

Child/children's name:

Parent 1 profession:

Parent 2 profession:

Does your child have an EHCP:

Days you require childcare on the days that you are working:

Please do not be offended if we ask for verification of the above.