



Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following Wednesday's announcement by the Prime Minister that due to the growing number of students and staff who are not able to attend schools for reasons linked to COVID-19, we will be closing the school with effect from **Friday 20th March 2020**.

We hope to be able to resume normal school operations as soon as possible however, it is entirely possible that this could be a much longer closure.

Hence from Friday, until further notice, pupils can no longer attend classes. The school will place details of work that can be undertaken at home, on the school website by Monday. If appropriate we will update these as more resources become available. If we do that we will inform you of that through text.

It is therefore essential that you ensure your mobile phone details are up to date with the school. The school will contact you at regular intervals via the text service and the website to keep you informed as soon as we get more information.

We will be looking to assist families as best we can, and we are looking to work alongside the LA in the provision of assistance to the most vulnerable families.

We will be providing a childcare facility for the children of Emergency and Essential workers in conjunction with other services, and school meals will be served to those children. **It is important to note that the Government have asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.** 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.

Should you wish your child to access childcare at school due to you being a critical worker/having a vulnerable child then please contact school to register your place. Please be advised that school will need to see evidence of your occupation to ensure that you fall into the critical workers category. If you are unsure then Government advice is to confirm with your employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential service.



More information for parents can be found on the following link:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Please continue to follow government advice during the days/weeks ahead. And please find ways of staying in touch with your friends and family, even if you are required to self-isolate. The measure of any of us is the way we react in a crisis.

We are all looking forward to a time when all members of the school community can get back to normal operations. For now though, we must all commit to doing the best that we can to look after ourselves and each other in these extremely unusual and challenging circumstances.

There will be hardship and heartache ahead as the virus touches our family and friends, we will, as your school family think of you all often, as we work together to beat coronavirus.

I know that for many families it will be a difficult time financially. The LA have undertaken the role of producing school dinners for those qualifying for Free School Meals. Please see below guidance for Parents/Carers whose child is in receipt of a free school meal from Knowsley Local Authority.

#### **Children still attending schools**

If your child is still attending school as they are the child of a key worker or they meet the criteria set out by the Government then they will still be provided with a free school meal from the school that they are attending on the days that they attend. All school kitchens remain open.

#### **Support for Pupils who have to stay off**

The Government is still developing a national voucher scheme that will be rolled out. At the current time the date for this hasn't been confirmed. But further details of how this will work will be announced shortly. It is likely to be a food voucher for £10 a week but again we are awaiting details of this. Any applications for food vouchers will need to be done via your schools directly who will issue you with a voucher. This will be in the form of a physical voucher or an e-voucher but again we are still awaiting guidance on this scheme. Your school will inform you when this is available.



### **What should I do in the interim period?**

The school meals service has made provision to cater for all children who are entitled to a free school meal from Monday 23 March 2020 until the national scheme is launched. Packed lunches will be available for distribution from the following children's centres:

Jubilee Children's Centre  
Twig Ln,  
Huyton,  
Liverpool  
L36 2L

Hilltop Children's Centre  
Bedford Close  
Huyton  
L36 1XH

Southmead Children's Centre  
Sherwood Drive  
Whiston  
L35 3XZ

### **What shall I do if my family and I are self-isolating?**

When the voucher scheme is set up it is expected that electronic vouchers will be issued and you will be able to receive these through your mobile phone or computer but we are still waiting on further details on that from the Government. Whilst we are waiting for that think about whether there anyone else who can collect the meal(s) on your behalf.

The Council has launched a new Coronavirus Community Support and Volunteer Line. The helpline number is **0800 073 0043** and is for residents to use to ask for help and advice. We are working to build a team of volunteers who you may be able to use to deliver lunches whilst you are self-isolating.

### **What if my Child is in a School outside Knowsley?**

If you attend a school that is Out of Borough you need to contact your school as they might have made alternative arrangements.



**Willow Tree**  
Primary School

I have also added the websites of local foodbanks below.

The location of local foodbanks:

<https://knowsley.foodbank.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. E. Riley  
Principal

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ACADEMY TRUST

