

Frettenham Primary School
Hainford Primary School
Horsford Primary School
Old Catton Junior School
White Woman Lane School
St. Faiths' Primary School



Nebula
where stars are born

Ashley Best-White
Executive Headteacher

19 March 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

COVID-19 Update – 19 March 2020

Please forgive the length of this update. I would like to take the opportunity to let you know what I have been able to gather from the confusing, and often conflicting information, given the lack of official information and advice.

We know that the pandemic is spreading fast across the country, with many new cases and now sadly some deaths too. We have been given the advice that to contain the virus we need to minimise/reduce/stop social contact. This obviously involves children and staff in schools too. This is why the schools are officially closing at the end of the day on Friday 20th March. Finally, there has been some recognition that schools are not going to be able to sustain opening every day and delivering an education with increasing numbers of pupils, families and staff becoming ill.

As you know, the Government has said we have to remain open to provide childcare for children of key workers. As I noted in my previous letter to you, we know that everyone may see their role as key, but we will have to be strict on what the definition of a key worker is. We will only have a limited number of places we can offer for children given the staffing difficulties, which are only likely to get worse.

It is likely that childcare for your child may not be offered at his/her usual school site, but at one of the other Nebula school sites so that we can utilise all available staff in order to sustain the likelihood of provision remaining open.

Although we were promised the information about key workers today, we are still waiting. I know you are all feeling apprehensive about yesterday's news and particularly that about key workers, but still the Government and the Local Authority have not provided this information and it may not be received until tomorrow (20th March) now.

We believe the guidance may say that in a two parent/adult household, both parents should be key workers and both must be in work to be eligible for a place at school. Step-parents would count in this family unit. If it is a single adult household, then that adult would have to be a key worker.

Therefore, we will be asking for information from those who think they are key workers once the list is released. We will ask you for information about your role and circumstances. We hope and expect everyone to be honest and thoughtful about their requirements to ensure we are able to sustain this service over the next few, probably more difficult, weeks to come. We will need to check our records of employment and contacts to verify information. We will also ask for some evidence of eligibility of a place in school, such as a work ID card that all NHS staff would have for example. Please respect the need for our staff to do this to ensure we allocate the limited places fairly. We will be adhering strictly to the list provided by the government.

What is a key worker?

The government said yesterday that key workers are likely to include NHS staff, police, and delivery drivers, who deliver food and supplies (not all delivery drivers). We are awaiting further clarity on the definition and will update you as this becomes available.

Norfolk County Council have also shared this information with us.

"We have not yet received the guidance from the DfE about key workers. We aim to send letters for parents of vulnerable children and all other parents tomorrow alongside lists of children in the vulnerable category".

What is a vulnerable child?

The government describes vulnerable children as those who have a social worker and those with Education, Health and Care Plans. The council is working closely with schools and partners to safeguard all children during this difficult time. Children with EHCPs often have additional medical needs, which makes them on the vulnerable list who should avoid social contact, and therefore you may wish to consider what is best for the safety and wellbeing of your child. Although all children with an EHCP qualify to come in during the school closure, this is in no way compulsory and if your child has an EHCP (not being assessed or considered) then please let us know your preferences at this time. The EHCP regulations will only apply to the actual child with the EHCP and not to any brothers or sisters.

Only these children qualify for school care during closure. We will not be able to provide any formal education, this will most likely be care and the home learning tasks as we have no idea how many staff will be available due to their own illness, vulnerability factors or self-isolation due to their own family being unwell.

Therefore, in summary, unless both parents in a two adult household have one of these professions

- NHS Staff
- Police
- Delivery driver (most likely for supermarket or supplying supermarkets)
- Teachers/TAs may be on this list but this is not yet clear

OR

A child has a full EHCP plan

OR

A child is on a Child Protection Plan/has an allocated social worker

You should generally assume, at this point in time, that your child will finish school at the end of the day on Friday 20 March 2020 and will not be in school again until such time as the Government reopens them.

We would ask if your child is eligible that you only send them if you absolutely need to, e.g. if your shift covers the school day. Obviously, it remains your choice and decision whether you send your child at all.

We appreciate this is a very challenging time for parents who need to work, but the schools are closing as directed by the Government and Health officials and we need to work together to follow the guidance.

As soon as we can, we will let you know how best to inform us if you meet one of the criteria above, so **please do not ring or email** to tell us or ask questions as we are all working tirelessly with the information we have. Things may change on a daily basis and the list may be wider but we want you to know so you can begin to make appropriate plans.

I hope I will be able to provide you with more definitive information by the end of Friday afternoon.

Please note the rules on isolation will still apply during this time e.g. if your child or anyone in your household displays symptoms, they will not be allowed into school and you will all have to self-isolate for 14 days.

Be kind and look after each other.

Kind regards



Ashley Best-White
Executive Headteacher
The Nebula Federation