



Porters Grange Primary School & Nursery

Part of the Portico Academy Trust

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Friday 20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Coronavirus update – key workers and free school meals

Very late last night, the Government finally published its guidance around the children who will be able to attend school during the school closure. As advised, we will do all we can to stay open for the children of key workers and children with certain needs.

The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. **If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.**

That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for **those children who absolutely need to attend.**

It is important to underline that schools remain safe places for children. **However, 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.**

We now know, from the new and revised guidance, that the skeleton care provision will be for:

- ‘Vulnerable children’ which includes children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, ‘looked after’ children, young carers, disabled children and those with [education, health and care \(EHC\) plans](#).
- Children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

It is vitally important that we know as soon as possible the number of children for whom we will need to provide care. Earlier today we sent out a School Ping through which you can tell us if you meet the criteria and are in need of childcare. Where we have been informed of a child’s attendance next week via School Ping or a direct conversation, **the school will be open to them between 8am and 3pm from Monday.**

The Government is asking that the following principles are followed:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.

We are a **good** school in all areas

“The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is Outstanding”



Children at home entitled to free school meals

As a school we will be putting together our response to the Government's release last night regarding free school meals. We will be in contact with families as soon as possible.

We are working with new information and it takes a little time to put everything into place. Please bear with us. Please keep checking School Ping as this will be our primary method of contact. If you do not have the app, please download it as soon as possible. If you require your log in to be resent to you, contact the school office on office@portersgrange.southend.sch.uk.

I feel I must say that the support we have received from parents and carers over recent weeks has been fantastic and I need to thank everyone for pulling together and really supporting us as a school. I also need to extend a huge thank you to the amazing team of staff we have at the school. Everyone is working under significant pressure, yet still doing such an excellent job of caring for and educating our young people.

Yours faithfully,

Miss D Henley
Principal