



Cromford C of E Primary School
North Street
Cromford
Derbyshire.
DE4 3RG

Telephone: 01629 822248

Fax: 01629 823737

E mail: info@cromford.derbyshire.sch.uk

Website: www.cromfordcofeschool.com

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Foster, BA (Hons) QTS, NPQH

20th March, 2020

Dear Parents and carers,

This is once again a lengthy letter about the ongoing situation with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) arrangements. Please ensure that you read all the way through.

First of all a reminder that, for the vast majority of children, **all schools will be closed as of the end of the school day today (Friday 20th March)** until further notice.

A letter was sent out yesterday regarding learning at home and provision for the vast majority of pupils who will not be in school for the time-being, but this letter is to let parents know about the plans we have to provide for the children of 'key workers' and those pupils that are classed as most vulnerable.

Plans for Childcare Provision: COGS (the Cluster of Gell Schools), have made good use of the long-standing network of headteachers over the past two days to be able to plan for the childcare that the government have asked us to provide. I am very grateful to my COGS colleagues in this planning and to Emma Marshall for attending in my absence as I am now having to Socially Distance myself due to underlying health issues. I was however able to join the discussions via video calling.

Although a small number of local schools believe they have the capacity to open individual schools, Middleton, Brassington, The Village Federation, Cromford and Wirksworth Junior School are working together so that we can (hopefully!) maintain a service as requested by the government over the coming weeks, supporting the health and well-being of everyone involved and allowing for the inevitable increase in staff shortages. Anthony Gell School continue to work closely with us, but for a variety of reasons, we are all in agreement that it is sensible to provide for secondary children separately. Working together, we have created the following plan:

- Cromford School will be open on Monday with a smaller group of staff available as some are now self isolating or required to be socially distancing. The provision will **only** be available for 'Key workers' and those pupils classed as most vulnerable.
- From Tuesday March 24th there will be an offer of childcare from 8am-4.30pm based at Wirksworth Junior School for children who need it on any given day (see below for a definition of 'need' and for children who are eligible). We expect that no family would use

Learn, aspire and achieve in a caring Christian environment

provision beyond the normal school hours for their normal school and that the children will only be in for as long as it necessary;

- To start with, we aim that the provision will be staffed beyond the requirements of the number of children we expect to attend and will, initially, have representatives from each school that has children attending. Moving forward, as staff get to know the children involved, there may not be any member of staff from an individual school on a given day;
- Where the provision being based on Wirksworth means that eligible children are unable to attend due to transport issues, we will work with families and the Local Authority to try and put transport in place as soon as possible;
- For some age-groups, we may not be providing the normal pupil:staff ratios, but we will ensure that all provision is fully risk-assessed to ensure a safe environment for all children at all times. Whilst we still have the capacity, we will also ensure that there are specialists in each age-group (Early Year, Infants and Juniors);
- This will not be a 'drop-in' facility. Children's attendance will only be by advance arrangement or, in emergencies, with an agreement from the headteacher group who will be running the provision;
- A guiding principle will always be in place that the safety of the children is paramount, if we are unable to provide safe care for any given child due to staff shortages or lack of expertise, we will not be able to cater for that child until we can make it safe to do so;
- For those that 'book-in' from Tuesday onwards (see form below) you will be sent a letter with directions, parking arrangements and what to do on arrival in a separate letter at the start of next week;
- When you arrive, you will be asked to sign your child in and will also need to complete some forms, so please allow at least **15 minutes** to drop off your child for the first time;
- Children can bring a packed lunch or order a cooked meal. At the moment we expect normal policy to apply, with infants and those entitled to a free school meal able to have a school dinner for free and everyone else to pay for any dinners they choose to have whilst using the provision. We have not currently looked at charges for provision outside of the normal 9am-3.30pm school day. As Wirksworth has a cooking kitchen, we expect that a normal range of dinner options will be available.

Learn, aspire and achieve in a caring Christian environment

Please note that **this is not normal school provision** – it is an **emergency** childcare initiative which will be safe and enjoyable for everyone involved, but will not be the equivalent of normal school provision in terms of the educational content of each day.

Eligible Children: The government has now provided a comprehensive list of ‘Key Workers’ within the information to be found at the following

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

Please note that the guidance refers to ‘essential’ workers for many of the groups. As an example, local NHS trusts have already identified groups of workers who can work from home, so simply working for the NHS does not qualify a family for these arrangements.

The guidance also clarifies ‘vulnerable children’ as 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](#).”.

If you believe that your child is not covered by the ‘vulnerable’ category above, but that they will need extra support beyond what you can provide at home, please contact me at info@cromford.derbyshire.sch.uk as soon as possible. We will also be contacting families where the school’s judgement is that they should be offered some provision but do not currently qualify.

Please also note the guiding principles within the information:

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.*

In order to best protect both children and staff during this crisis, we will be asking that childcare is requested only where there is a ‘need’. Although having one ‘critical worker’ in the household may qualify your child for this provision, we would expect that if there is a non-critical worker in the home

Learn, aspire and achieve in a caring Christian environment

capable of basic childcare during the day that guiding principle 1 should be the starting point for families. The guidance reaffirms this stance with the following statement:

“Many parents working in these critical sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. **Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.**”

We would ask that all families consider the impact on themselves, their families and others in terms of the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) before requesting childcare.

Action for Parents:

- If you haven't already, please inform school if you believe that you qualify for the childcare arrangements AND whether you think that you may need to use them.
- **Whether you have already been in touch or not, please use the form below to indicate which days you will require childcare and what hours you will need that for so that we can plan staff arrangements accordingly.**
- If you are booking provision, please let us know if your child will need a school dinner. We will provide breakfast and after school club for those who are eligible to attend. But please only use this if you need to. We expect normal arrangements for paid/free school meals to be in place.

Free School Meals: There will be a number of children who are entitled to a free school meal (**NOT** 'universal' free school meals that are provided to infants) who are not eligible for the childcare arrangements. There is work underway for a national voucher scheme for children whilst they are off school, but whilst this is being put in place, please inform us if you need support with this so that we can try to order individual vouchers for you to use – until our capacity improves we will not be doing this as a matter of course so it is **vital that you inform us if you need vouchers or the opportunity to collect a free school meal as soon as possible.**

We appreciate that there is a lot of information to digest in this letter, so please ask any questions that you might have.

With very best wishes from all at Cromford School

Liz Foster

Learn, aspire and achieve in a caring Christian environment

To be completed by families who are eligible for this provision.

My child/children will require child care provision on the following days **NEXT WEEK**

			Please indicate what times you require
Mon 23 rd March	Cromford School 8:45am – 3:15pm	Yes/no	
Tues 24 th March	Wirksworth Juniors Hub 8am – 4:30pm	Yes/no	
Wed 25 th March	Wirksworth Juniors Hub 8am – 4:30pm	Yes/no	
Thur 26 th March	Wirksworth Juniors Hub 8am – 4:30pm	Yes/no	
Fri 27 th March	Wirksworth Juniors Hub 8am – 4:30pm	Yes/no	

Name of child/children

Learn, aspire and achieve in a caring Christian environment