



CASTLE SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE

Headteacher: Chris Baker

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Date: 20th March 2020
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Dear Parents and Carers

Can I start by thanking you all for your support and care offered to us during what has been the most difficult week. We are all finding the ongoing changes to our lives extremely challenging and as a school community we will continue to support each other in whatever way we can.

I have spoken to many of you during the week and will continue to be available to support you as we go forward.

Our school will be open on Monday and will continue to be open for as long as we can enable it to be. If you meet any of the criteria below then you are welcome to send your child in. I must remind you that school will not be a virus free place and it is your decision whether or not to send them in. As mentioned below, it continues to be Government Policy to isolate at home where you can. We will do our best to accommodate all pupils who arrive however, if staffing levels drop below a level where we can safely offer an appropriate level of care we will send pupils home. There will be a message on the website from myself to try and clarify our position.

In order to help with our planning, please let us know whether or not you intend to send your child in to school next week either by emailing the school office on Office@castle.cambs.sch.uk or by phone 01223 442400.

We have been notified that the guidance the Local Authority agreed yesterday with the Department for Education around support for parents from Monday onwards, has been superseded and this letter outlines the current position (March 20th am).



The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 remains clear. The government have requested these key principles are followed:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home safely, then they should be.
2. Parents should not rely for childcare on those 'who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category'. This includes grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
3. 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.

The Government has requested that all schools provide **optional** care for a **limited number of children**. These are:

- Children who are vulnerable i.e. those who are:
 - Supported by Social Care
 - Children in Care – known as Looked After Children (LAC)
 - Young carers
 - Disabled Children
 - Or have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)
- Children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

All other children will need to stay at home.

The government has also published an updated list of key workers which is attached to this letter. The guidance has also been revised to outline that this support is for children with **at least one parent or carer** who are identified as 'critical workers' by the government.

I want to reiterate the key message about the closure plans: **Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be**. We absolutely understand that families are worried about being able to work but these are extraordinary times and we are all having to make some very difficult decisions and sacrifices. However, with the challenges we face with our own staff and the national social distancing policy, we wish to minimise any risks and the number of students attending should only be in circumstances where it is essential.

We will now be offering child care as opposed to formal education. If you have any questions regarding this please do contact school. At this time we are also open to a very flexible approach that may involve pupils coming in on a part time basis and parents supporting key activities such as swimming to enable it to occur.

This remains an ever-changing situation and the position may well change again in the future. We will continue to update you as the need arises.



I wish to thank all our school staff, volunteers, and Governors who have helped in recent days to keep the school open, and who will continue to do so over the coming months. I would also like to thank you for your continued support and understanding during this period.

Best wishes

Chris Baker
Headteacher

Enc: Definition of Key Workers



Definition of Key Workers

Health and social care

This includes (but is not limited to); doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers and other frontline health and social care staff including; volunteers, the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector, those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical/personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

This includes; nursery and teaching staff, teaching assistants, support staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes; those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services. Those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting are to be included.

Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arm's length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector



and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

