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Friday 20th March

Dear Parents/Carers,

Guidance for schools remaining open from Monday was posted in the early hours this morning. The guidance is very clear, 'If children can stay safely at home, they should.' The government have 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.

My view as your Head teacher, based on the guidance, is that all parents should endeavour to keep their children at home safely. The fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread across our community and further afield.

Therefore please read the guidance from the government below before making your decision.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision?fbclid=IwAR0bw2mh1vPBfncuKKMfNm0eexgk0q65mvG-esGQBavtsVAe_bclmlBIF9A

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors, we are making arrangements to provide childcare, between school hours (9am – 3pm) to enable you to keep the country operating. If you feel that you are a critical worker and require childcare, you must complete a 'Key Worker Audit' available from: admin@whitegate.cheshire.sch.uk

Furthermore, we will take all practical steps to keep our vulnerable children safe.

As Gavin Williamson (Education Minister) has said, 'School will not be an educational setting and they are not going to follow the national curriculum, but it's going to be a safe place of people who are key to combating this virus and keeping the country moving forward'. Therefore, we expect parents ensure their children complete learning tasks, at home, in the evening.

We will provide a hot lunch, should your child require it, at a cost of £2.30, or you can send in a packed lunch.

You will be contacted later today if we are able to offer a place for your child.

In summary, the scientific guidance is clear – the fewer the children we have in school each day, the greater chance we have of limiting the risk of the virus spreading.

These are testing times and it is our civic and moral duty to keep our community safe, whilst at the same time keeping our critical services operating.

Children staying at home

For all the children that are staying at home, we have provided some paper based learning. Teachers, as long as they are well, will update their class page on the school website, to set out the key learning for each day.

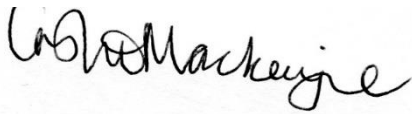
Mr Heathcote has updated, 'Our Approach to Physical Education' with activities that can be completed at home and Mrs Savage has provided information on the 'SEND information' page, for those who require additional support.

A number of staff are also planning to use Twitter to keep in touch.

As the children will be online, please ensure that your safety measures are in place and try to limit the amount of time your children are engaged in screen time.

Outside of school, parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially, so that we do not continue to spread the virus.

Take Care and God Bless. Look after each other and please do use our social media outlets to keep us up to date with your child's learning – we will be delighted to see it.



Caroline Mackenzie

Do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9)