**Coronavirus (COVID-19): template letter for parents/carers**

**Information about the current situation regarding** *[Insert name of school]* **and coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Dear *[Name of parent/carer]*,

I am writing to update you on the recent government announcements about coronavirus and the tighter restrictions placed on movement for all UK citizens.

Despite the firm instruction that we must all stay at home except for very limited purposes, schools will continue to provide the essential care for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children, if they cannot be safely cared for at home.

More information is given on vulnerable children and critical workers in **Sections 1 and 2** of the attached information sheet.

During this period, we would ask that you follow these key principles in considering your child’s care and education.

* If it is possible for children to stay at home, do not bring them into school.
* Where children classify as vulnerable, or where you or your partner are a critical worker, then schools will be on hand to provide support. In order to limit the risk of infection, *[Insert name of school]* should only be used where all other avenues of support have been exhausted.
* However, you should not rely on people who fall into an at-risk category for childcare arrangements such as grandparents or those with underlying health conditions.
* You should do everything you can to ensure children do not mix socially and that they observe the same social distancing advice as that given to adults.

If your child does come into school, then please be assured that we are doing everything we can to ensure their safety and wellbeing, by following the precautions set out in **Section 3** of the information sheet.

**Online resources**

During this time, the school will continue to provide resources so that your child can continue with their learning at home. In addition to these arrangements, there are also a number of external websites you can use to educate your children and keep them motivated. These are listed in **Section 4** of the information sheet.

Lastly, we want to make sure that we continue to do all we can to make sure all of our children stay as healthy and happy as possible throughout these uncertain times.  Our teachers will stay in regular contact with them, and I have also included several useful sites that specialise in supporting children with their mental health and wellbeing in **Section 5** of the information sheet.

We want only the very best for the children within our care and if there is anything that we can do to support you then please do get in touch with us via the school switchboard or email and we will be more than happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

Name: ……………………………………… Date: …………………………………

**Additional information**

1. **Vulnerable children** are those children who are supported by a social worker, have active Child in Need or Child Protections plans, are in non-familial care arrangements, are young carers or have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Please search ‘[COVID-19 guidance on vulnerable children and young people](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people)’ on GOV.UK should you require more information.
2. **Critical workers** are people who work in key areas that are essential to support the country’s running during the pandemic. The list includes NHS staff, education and childcare, food and other necessary good and public security. Please search ‘[Guidance for schools, childcare providers, colleges and local authorities in England on maintaining educational provision](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision)’ on GOV.UK should you require more information or.
3. **To keep the school infection free,** *[Insert school name]* **will employ the following principles.**
* *Anyone needing to visit or attend [Insert school name] should not if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus.*

*Parents and carers are asked to think carefully about how they get to school and to avoid any unnecessary travel on public transport where possible.*

* *Parents and carers are to follow social distancing guidelines when they drop off and collect children. Please search ‘*[*Guidance on social distancing*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults)*’ on GOV.UK should you require more information.*
* *Children are to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds when they arrive and before they leave, and before and after break and lunch times.*
* *Class sizes are kept as small as possible.*
* *Break and lunch times are staggered to limit the movement of children around the school and to reduce groups of children gathering where possible.*
* *Increased cleaning of surfaces, toilets and other key areas are being carried out.*

1. **Activities to keep pupils stimulated and motivated**
* [*PE daily at 9am with Joe Wicks*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wzoy_J3I_c)
* [*BBC Bitesize*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize) *- Lots of resources, clearly divided into subject and age categories*
* [*TED-Ed*](https://ed.ted.com/) *- From the organisation behind Ted talks – lots of lessons worth sharing from around the globe*
* [*Tynker*](https://www.tynker.com/)*- Coding for kids*
* [*BrainPop*](https://www.brainpop.com/)*- Animated movies on topics in maths, science and English*
* [*Creative Bug*](https://www.tynker.com/)*- Craft lessons including drawing, knitting, jewellery making and origami*
1. **Supporting children in difficult times**

We know that everyone is worried about the spread of coronavirus and the impact that it is having on you, your families and your loved ones. It is normal to feel like this and it is important to look after yourself and your family both mentally and physically. Encourage your children to talk about their fears and do your best to address them by talking about what is worrying them.  This is a difficult period and there are a number of organisations who have published guidance on mental health for children (and adults) which may help you.

* [*Young Minds*](https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/)
* [*Mind*](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/)
* [*The Mental Health Foundation*](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak)
* [*Anna Freud*](https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/anna-freud-learning-network/coronavirus/)
* [*The Children’s Society*](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/coronavirus-information-and-support)
* [*NHS*](https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/)