

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your patience. I have been able to seek clarification on a number of issues. However, many unanswered questions still remain. The situation is very fluid and will continue to be changeable for a while longer yet. The information below is correct for the week commencing, Monday, 23rd March. It may change during the week or in the weeks to come. As previously mentioned, please be formulating your own back-up plans if you qualify for your child to attend our setting next week.

Please find information below which will hopefully help clarify this situation we find ourselves in:

Schools are shut as of today, Friday, 20th March until the foreseeable future. We open on Monday, 23rd March **as childcare settings**, not schools. Our sole purpose is to provide a facility for those children **who have no other alternative** other than to attend our setting. Please note, those children who turn up on Monday, where we have no prior notice of their attendance will not be allowed into our setting. In these circumstances, parents will be contacted to come and collect their child(ren). If this is not possible, then we will follow our usual Safeguarding protocols. As previously stated in all DfE documentation, schools **should only** be used where there is no other alternative. This is to achieve the objective of slowing down and restricting the spread of Covid-19, hence why there has been a total shutdown of all schools. **Those who are eligible and who are expected in school on Monday, will have already received a message confirming this (we are still in the process of messaging people).**

DfE guidance:

‘Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be’.

Thank you to those parents who have made alternative provision or have given specific days which are required.

On Monday, for those eligible to attend, school will be **open from 8 am until 5 pm:**

- Breakfast Club – 8.00am until 9.00am (cost = £2.50 including breakfast).
- Normal hours – 9.00am until 3.30pm.
- After School Club – 3.30pm until 5.00pm (cost = £2.50)

I appreciate this is slightly different to our usual opening hours, however, after Monday, we will be on reduced staffing levels. These times may have to change if the staffing levels change due to staff having to self-isolate. Those children who are attending, please come in wearing your PE uniform. It is likely that you will be required to wear your usual uniform on Tuesday and Wednesday, but this has not yet been confirmed. **Provision is being made, should school be required to do so, for us to continue to offer these time slots during the Easter Holidays. This may change depending on need or change of position from Government.**

I have sought guidance from the Local Authority regarding siblings of children with an EHCP. **Unfortunately, siblings of children with a EHC plan, are not entitled to attend school**, unless they fall into another category.

or those children with an EHC plan or are classed as vulnerable, school still has to follow its usual attendance and safeguarding procedures. If you fall within one of these categories and have chosen for your child to stay at home, please be aware, that school will be in contact with yourselves at several points during the week.

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals (this does not include Key Stage 1 children who access this through the Universal Free School Meals route), then a meal will be provided for your child on Monday. The Government are working on different options and are trying to provide a national scheme. If your child is in school and is in receipt of this offer, then a packed lunch will be provided for your child. **If your child is not attending school, then a packed lunch will be available for collection from the office between 12.30 pm – 1.30 pm. Please contact the office, if you are in receipt of Free School Meals but will not be taking up this offer.** Otherwise, we will assume, you require this service.

For those families who are not in receipt of Free School Meals, you can purchase a packed lunch from our school provider (Mellors) or send your child in with their own. Again, if you usually have a school meal but are providing your own packed lunch, please contact the office to inform us – this will help to reduce our costs.

Home Learning:

Between the hours of 9 am – 10 am on Monday, staff will be informing you all via each class' Facebook page, the work that has been set. At this moment in time, we are appreciative of the fact that you are all dealing with a host of uncertainties and each circumstance is very different. I am aware that some schools have sent out timetables, however, for the time being, we will not be doing this. For next week, staff have prepared work to be completed on Purple Mash. In addition to this, children have access to: TTRockstars, NumberGym, Literacy shed videos (ideas to stimulate discussions / writing) BBC and YouTube curriculum videos. On Monday, I will also provide a list of other websites that you can use to help stimulate your children (this afternoon a link has been posted to Premier's Stay Active Site and earlier in the week, I posted a link to the Body Coach). *I feel for the time being, time spent with your children over the weekend is the most valuable thing we can do, rather than thinking about Monday morning.* Within the DfE document released earlier today, reference was made to them working with the BBC and other providers to help parents while the children are at home. Our website has all the curriculum information on there, if you are unsure where to obtain which topics the children are studying:

<https://www.athertonsacredheart.wigan.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Subject-Coverage-completed.pdf>

Some classes have done Food technology in Autumn Term instead of textiles - due to staff reviewing our curriculum offer.

Please note: Monday, schools become Childcare settings and so will not be being taught by staff. If required, they can access Purple Mash, TT rockstars or other programmes.

Facebook:

Thank you for your help and support in assisting me in ensuring this was up and running before the end of today. These have been set up so that we can communicate with you directly on a class by class basis rather

than clogging up the main school page. The main page will be used for communication which affects more than one class. At the moment, we think the settings are very relaxed. This allows you to post appropriate comments and hopefully, it will allow you to upload photographs (for those who have given permission) to the pages as and when appropriate. Any inappropriate comments will be deleted. Staff will not be monitoring this daily and I urge you not to do so either. We are working on new routines for next week. However, there is still so much to sort that this rota does not fall into the priority category. ParentMail will still be used to send out whole school communications.

The school office will be open on Monday as usual. From Monday onwards, this too will be operating according to different criteria and hours of work. The 'enquiries' email address can still be used by parents. This will be monitored at appropriate times during the week, so if you email in, it may take longer than 3-5 days to respond.

I know there will be more questions to answer in the coming days.

Thank you all once again for all that you have done during these past few weeks. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Today, is a very strange day. The children have had a great time. There have been lots of smiles throughout the day and I hope we can all make it past 3.30 pm still smiling. As our behaviour motto says: Together Everyone Achieves More #TEAMsacredheart.

Thinking of you all in these difficult times.

Kind Regards

Mr M^cDermott