

Prior's Mill C.E. Primary School

Clifton Avenue, Billingham. Stockton-on-Tees, TS22 5BX

Tel: 01642 650 426

Email: office@priorsmill.org.uk



5th January 2021

Dear Parents

SCHOOL PROVISION DURING LOCKDOWN

Thank you for your patience today as we have answered calls and emails regarding provision for vulnerable children and children of critical workers and also queries about SeeSaw logins. Staff are working as quickly as they can to respond to messages but alongside other usual responsibilities, there can be a short delay. Things will settle down over the next few days. I hope that everyone who hasn't been in school today has had a good day – we have missed you!

I am writing to confirm our plans until February 12th which is the time frame the PM announced last night for the current school closure.

Learning

Obviously, our high priority is to keep the children moving forward in their learning. Therefore, it is vital that every child engages with the learning planned whether they are attending school or completing work at home. Learning will be sequential – meaning that lessons and activities will build on the previous learning and will, as far as possible, mirror the learning that would have taken place in classes had school been operating normally.

Children attending school will complete the same work as children working at home. Teachers will adapt and support the remote work for children as they would do in class to make sure that work is pitched at the right level for children. Obviously, in school an adult would be able to come alongside and rephrase a question or offer an alternative example and this is what won't be possible via home learning. If you find that your child needs lots more support than expected or your child would manage greater challenge, please communicate this to the class teacher via SeeSaw and we will work with you to improve things.

By learning in this way, when lockdown is eventually over, we hope that classes will be able to move back to full teaching much more smoothly as the class will have progressed through the curriculum together. This will put us in a much stronger position than in September and hopefully will mitigate the impact of this further closure much more rapidly.

Attendance Expectations

School is only open to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers.

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance.



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Government guidance expects vulnerable children to attend school everyday during lockdown. A member of the leadership team will have been in touch with you today, if this applies to your child, to have a conversation about school attendance. We are sensitive to individual family circumstances and whilst we must follow government expectations, we understand that each child and their needs are unique to them.

Critical workers have roles in the following sectors:

- Health & social care
- Education & childcare
- Key public services
- Local and national government
- Food and other necessary goods
- Public and national security
- Transport and border
- Utilities, communication and financial services

A more detailed definition that we use to assess eligibility for attendance can be found [here](#).

Attendance for these children can be more flexible i.e. children can either attend every day – even if parents aren't working – or only on the days that parents are working. This is to offer as much continuity as possible for children. We are able to offer flexibility at the moment but may need to impose a 'working day only' approach if our overall attendance increases.

If children of critical workers do not attend every day, it is really important that they continue with SeeSaw learning from home so that they are in step with the class when they return to school.

Attendance Recording, Safeguarding and Keeping in Touch

Government instructions to schools regarding registers and recording attendance is as follows:

- *Vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time.*
- *Schools and colleges should encourage vulnerable children to attend but if the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent from school, the parent should let the school know that the pupil will not be attending. The Department for Education expects schools and colleges to grant such applications for leave given the exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.*
- *As with vulnerable children, critical worker parents and carers should let schools know if their child will not be attending and, if not, schools should grant a leave of absence (code C) given the exceptional circumstances.*
- *All pupils who are not expected to be in school should be marked as Code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.*

Registers will be checked daily and a member of the office team, usually Miss Green, will contact the families of any vulnerable or critical worker children that we are expecting to see in school who have not arrived as



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part of our safeguarding duties. Please do not be offended by this, we must follow our usual attendance and safeguarding procedures.

As SeeSaw provides regular contact between home and school, staff will not routinely telephone families to see how things are going. If a child has not engaged in learning, the class teacher will ring and will work with you to overcome barriers to your child taking part. Our Education Welfare Officer, Mrs Cartwright, will also make some home visits from time to time to say hello and offer additional support.

Daily Arrangements for Children Attending

- Children will be taught in distinct year group bubbles. Pre-School and Nursery will be combined into one bubble. Bubbles will continue to be kept apart during lessons and breaks to minimise contacts.
- Staff have been organised into two teams of teachers and teaching assistants who will work in school on alternate weeks in order to provide both in school and remote learning. Please see below for the Teacher plan as it is now but please also understand that this is subject to change if pupil numbers increase or there is any staff absence.
- Children attending must wear uniform.
- All children in school will be offered a packed lunch meal – free to children in receipt of free school meals and free to all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
- KS2 children will still be offered the option of a hot meal.
- School day is our current times for starting and finishing and children should arrive and leave via their usual paths and gates.

	TEAM 1			TEACHER		
	4/1/21	18/1/21	1/2/21	11/1/21	25/1/21	8/2/21
PS/NUR	MRS THOMAS			MISS NOBLE		
RECEPTION	MRS ROWBOTHAM			MISS MAZZEY		
YEAR 1	MR FARRELL			MISS ALDERSON		
YEAR 2	MISS THOMPSON			MRS LEGENDER		
YEAR 3	MISS DALKIN			MRS SAINT		
YEAR 4	MR GREENWOOD			MISS RIGG		
YEAR 5	MISS BLACKETT			MR STOKES		
YEAR 6	MISS HORNER			MISS KEMP		

Arrangements for Free School Meals for Children Not Attending

We have not received any information yet about the long-term plan for providing free school meal support. We will be in touch with families tomorrow and Thursday regarding interim arrangements.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any queries or concerns please do remember to get in touch. I trust we all have a slightly more restful evening after the drama of 8pm last night!

Kind regards,
Mrs H Malbon
Headteacher

