

20th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Bernard Gilpin Primary School – Coronavirus update

You will be aware that the decision was made yesterday by the Government to close all schools as of today, Friday 20th March 2020. Whilst this represents decisive action, the Government are still trying to plan for the impact that this will have. This is understandable, as schools are central to their community and there are as significant number of issues to address.

The Government have also explained that schools would stay open for the children of “key workers”. These are actions that they feel to be necessary based on the current national emergency.

As we prepare to close at 3:15 p.m. today I would like to explain some actions that we have taken regarding the three points made by the Government yesterday:

School closure and communication

School will close today at 3:15 p.m. During the national closure, if any decisions are made by the Department for Education during this period we will communicate with parents/carers via the school website www.bernardgilpin.com. Please do check the website regularly.

Key workers

The Government has announced that after Friday 20th March schools will be open only for the children of “key workers” **only** from Monday 23rd March. Like all schools, we are continuing to await clarification about how this will be managed. **What is clear is that the Government has stated “every child who can be safely cared for at home should be”**. Schools are to remain open and provide childcare for a limited number of children who absolutely need to attend. Our school will be open from Monday 23rd March for the children of identified key workers only. Please note, school is operating with a skeleton staff and provision may change over the coming weeks.

Keeping safe

As a country, we **all** need to do what we can to stop the spread of Coronavirus. The Government has given clear guidance on **household isolation, self-isolation and social distancing**. **The most recent scientific advice also says that if children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. Parents/carers should also do everything they can to ensure that children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. Children should observe the same social distancing principles as adults. Please see link below for more information.** <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 behalf of myself, the staff and Governors I thank you for your continued support and co-operation in this unprecedented time. I feel privileged to serve Bernard Gilpin’s school community, parents/carers and pupils. I wish you and your families good health in the weeks ahead. Take care.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A. Bainbridge
Headteacher