



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

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Dear Parents/Carers

I am sorry to be writing to you again so soon after recent letters, but as you will know, the national situation has altered significantly overnight. The changes announced by the Prime Minister have a significant impact on schools and we have had to shift from preparing school lessons and mass-testing, to providing on-line learning in a matter of hours.

The schools in the Midsomer Norton Schools' Partnership all remain open for children of critical workers and those considered vulnerable. Schools will have already contacted those parents/carers who have children that fall into these categories to determine how many pupils will be in each school. For the vast majority of children, learning will now take place at home via remote access. I thought it would be useful to list answers to a few questions which have been raised by Parents/Carers:

- 1) Children should attend school if they are considered vulnerable or if their Parents/Carers are considered critical workers. Priority will be given to children where both Parents/Carers are considered a critical worker. **We will not always be able** to accommodate requests where only one Parent/Carer is a critical worker, as teachers are delivering on-line lessons.
- 2) If Special Educational Needs (those with an Education Health Care Plan) or vulnerable pupils are attending school, I would ask that they attend consistently according to agreed days and not sporadically when the child feels like. This will ensure continuity of provision. Clearly if pupils are unwell, normal absence procedures should be followed.
- 3) If your child's school currently offers wraparound care, this will continue where feasible. However, it may not be possible to do this in 'bubbles' given staffing issues. However, children will be socially distanced when attending any before and after-school provision.
- 4) Pupils who are permitted to attend school, should continue to wear uniform until further notice.
- 5) Free School Meal boxes will be provided until the Government voucher scheme is rolled out nationally. Food boxes can be collected from your child's school from Thursday onwards. Children in school who are entitled to free school meals will have these provided. Children of critical workers who are not entitled to a free school meal, should bring a packed lunch.
- 6) **COVID-19 testing in secondary and special schools** will still be available for staff and pupils in school, so please complete the consent forms from my most recent letter, if your child is in school. Testing is likely to resume once pupils are back in school.
- 7) **If your child's school is planning to undertake public exams** in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 scheduled for January, those pupils sitting the exams may be invited in for preparation for these over the coming weeks.
- 8) Year 11 and 13 must continue working towards exams as there may be some public assessments to sit and we will continue to collect evidence of work so that if required, we can submit teacher assessments of likely outcomes.





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- 9) Visitors to school, including Trust staff, speech and language consultants, counsellors, educational psychologists, school nurse service, etc. will continue, although some may have to operate remotely.
- 10) Schools will contact every parent/carer over the coming 2–3 weeks to check on the welfare of all pupils.
- 11) We have been told that there will be more electronic devices provided for schools in the coming weeks. These will be issued to pupils who have limited access to on-line learning. Please do contact your school if this is a problem in your household.

Remote learning:

I have asked all teachers to deliver remote learning in line with their normal school day until February half-term. This means that teachers will be delivering **some** live learning/pre-recorded learning, or available to give instructions/support to children when they would normally have lessons. Completely live lessons are not particularly useful. When teaching a group in one room, dialogue and discussion is an important part of the learning process. This is not possible on-line in the same way and a series of live lessons can become rather dull and detract from the learning process. Teachers may introduce learning, or model an expectation related to learning, set work and answer questions about the set work and so on. This will ensure a good mix of learning opportunities.

We will be monitoring the quality of online provision over the coming weeks and hope that all pupils engage in the planned learning. Those that do not, will be contacted and will be expected to catch up on any missed learning. Ensuring that pupils keep up with learning is vital, so that when we do return pupils can quickly catch up. Please do contact your child's school if you are worried about the work your child is undertaking.

Thank you for your understanding at a time when the national agenda seems to be changing daily.

Yours sincerely

Alun Williams
CEO

