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**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March**

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Pioneer Federation Schools closure**

We have now received further guidance from the government around which children will still have education provided for them.

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. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.**

Please, therefore, follow these key principles:

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.
5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.

The first question that must be considered when making a decision about where your child should be as of Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March is outlined by the government. They are recommending that:

**If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**

**We ask that you consider this carefully so that no child, adult or family is put at risk.**

The list of ‘Key Workers’, as defined by the government, is as follows:

**Health and social care**

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK’s health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

**Education and childcare**

This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

**Key public services**

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

**Local and national government**

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies.

**Food and other necessary goods**

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

**Public safety and national security**

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

## Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

## Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

We appreciate that this is a concerning and rapidly changing landscape and so will aim to keep you as updated with school arrangements as we can. Please inform your child's school office if you are not receiving emails. Updates will also be posted on all schools' websites.

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals (not including the Key Stage 1 provision), please contact your school to indicate whether you would like this service to continue throughout this closure period. We are liaising with Chartwells (our catering provider) about their plans to be able to provide food packages which can be delivered to you.

## The arrangements for Chiddingly and East Hoathly are:

If your child currently attends one of these schools and you require provision for them, these children will **all be based at Chiddingly School**. Please ensure they arrive at school for 8:50am and are picked up no later than 3:15pm. There will be a catering team on site if your child requires a hot meal and you should inform staff as soon as possible if this is the case. School uniform is optional during this closure period.

## The arrangements for St Mary the Virgin are:

From Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March, the children who require provision should attend the school from 8:50am and should be picked up no later than 3:15pm. Please note, there will be no catering team on site so your child will need a packed lunch. The continuation of this arrangement very much depends on the advice we receive from Local Authority. The likelihood is that, over the coming weeks, children from smaller local schools will be asked to attend another larger school in the locality and we will keep you as up to date as we can with details of this. School uniform is optional during this closure period.

We would ask that you continue to refer to the government's advice that children should be at home **where it is at all possible**, and that you regularly review your situation regarding your child(ren).

Staff across the Federation are working extremely hard to ensure that we play our part in fighting COVID-19 and it is a difficult time for all. Thank you for your continued support, understanding and patience at this time.

Stay safe and we look forward to welcoming you all back to school soon.

Yours sincerely,



Mr J Procter

Executive Headteacher



Mr A Brundle

Chair of Governors