



Aycliffe Village Primary School

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Statement about Home Learning during Temporary School Closure for COVID-19

March 2020

Rationale

This is an unprecedented situation and, as such, we are working towards effective ways of working and supporting our children, families and staff during this time.

Current government guidance is that these are '*extreme and exceptional circumstances*'. Therefore curriculum responsibilities have been temporarily lifted from schools:

Emergency legislation will lift curriculum requirements for schools, giving flexibility to provide support, activities and education in the way they see fit... We recognise that many schools have already shared resources for children who are at home and are grateful for this...DfE is working with the BBC and other partners to provide advice and support directly to parents, including online resources they can access for their children at home.

Taken from DfE document, Guidance for schools about temporary closures, 27th March 2020

Please follow the link below if you wish to read the full document.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing>

Our School's Position

Whilst curriculum responsibilities have been lifted we are keen, as a school, to support our pupils with their continued learning and to offer guidance to parents/carers about appropriate ways of doing this. We also wish to support, as best we can, with the pressure many families will have during this period of time when their children are at home.

Guiding Principles

- Whilst we are happy to help in any way we can, we believe it is not possible to recreate a full primary curriculum through online learning and/or sheets of paper—a level of practical exploration is key, due to the age of children. This is especially true of younger children where play is essential to learning.
- We appreciate the challenge many parents/carers will face when they are working from home and looking after their children. Whilst we will do all we can to support, we are not able to solve all issues raised nor can be held responsible for all of these. Many school staff are also managing similar situations, as parents themselves.
- We are committed to supporting with the continued education of our pupils however, are not able to replicate exactly what would happen in school and don't expect parents/carers to do this either.
- We believe the emotional well being of all our children and their families is paramount at this difficult and uncertain time. We would encourage parents/carers to be mindful of this and prioritise this alongside any educational activities they choose to do at home.
- Our response and what we can offer has been confirmed in light of our particular school context, including circumstances of staff, eg self isolation, illness, own child care commitments, caring for other family members. Obviously these factors impact on what staff are able to do and when they can do this. Many staff are working flexibly so they can manage all these commitments alongside the work commitments they continue to fulfil.



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- There are currently some new duties schools are responding to, the extent of which the general public might not be aware of. This has some impact on staff roles and capacity and has been considered when writing this statement.

We ask for patience, consideration and empathy from our families at this challenging time.

Actions taken so far and what you can expect from us

- All class teachers have uploaded an overview of suggested activities for subject areas to their **Class** section on our school website. This was explained to parents in a letter dated 19.03.20 and a reminder was given in a newsletter on 25.02.20. This was not intended as weekly information but more an overview of some suggested activities that could be given over a period of time. Staff email addresses have been shared there too so parents/carers can contact teachers if they have any queries.
- Teachers have been setting up Google Classroom pages and these will be used **from 30th March** so regular tasks can be set children. Please note we won't set these up for Reception children as we will use the Tapestry online learning system, for this purpose.
- After the Easter holidays (once the new system is all up and running) weekly activities will be available and in place **by 9.00am every Monday morning**. Some longer term projects may be uploaded instead and staff will explain these on individual Google Classroom pages.
- Staff will review tasks **once a week**. When they do this has not been set for all staff—many currently need to work flexibly as they have their own children to look after during usual working hours.
- As education professionals, teachers will share what they feel is an appropriate amount of activities/resources for the majority of children in their classes and for the situation we are currently in. **We won't be able to respond to requests for more activities.**
- If a staff member is ill and unable to work, we cannot guarantee that work will be uploaded and reviewed weekly. We will do our best to cover this but, due to the current situation, this might not be possible. In the event of this happening we would refer parents/carers back to the initial overview of activities.
- Although school will be open during the Easter holidays (to support with child care for children of key/critical workers) staff will not be setting activities during this time nor will they respond to emails from parents/carers. As a school, we will share some suggested activities for keeping children entertained during the holidays as we appreciate many usual activities will not be possible.

Additional Information

- We decided not to send home packs of printed worksheets as it is not possible to produce enough photocopied sheets to last for weeks/months. We also believe it is not possible to create an effective primary curriculum purely through worksheets or activities where children are sitting writing.
- If some parents/carers wish to use a work book approach to support their children's learning, we recommend CGP books we use in some year groups at school (these are available for all year groups). These can be ordered online and are very reasonably priced. **However we are certainly not saying these should be bought—it is just a suggestion for some parents who would like to use this approach.**
- We will continue to highlight the many other resources and activities that are available online and free of charge, through our school Facebook Page and on Google Classroom/Tapestry.



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Please liaise with school staff via their email addresses, if you have any questions or concerns. We don't want work shared via online learning to become something stressful for our families and something they feel has to be completed. Instead we are offering this as a support to families and ask you to choose what is appropriate for you to complete with your children, depending on your individual circumstances.

This statement will be reviewed when appropriate, in light of the changing situation, government and LA guidance and the length of the school closure.

30.03.20

<i>J Walsh</i>	Chair of Governors
<i>B Dean</i>	Chair of Children, School and Community Committee
<i>H Sutherland</i>	Head Teacher