
05 January 2021

Dear parent/carer

Coronavirus update – arrangements during lockdown until February half term

Following the government's announcement of further lockdown instructions across England, I'm writing to let you know the Trust's action plan in relation to the specific arrangements which will apply to all academies within Esteem Multi-Academy Trust **from Wednesday 06 January 2021.**

As advised by the government, we will do all we can to stay open for the children of critical workers (e.g. NHS staff, police, others in frontline services) and the most vulnerable students within our school communities. Our priority is to ensure a safe place for these pupils to be during school hours.

As a Trust with special and alternative provision academies, and many pupils with EHCPs, we could view the majority of our pupils as 'vulnerable' in one sense or another. However, as I'm sure you can appreciate, we will have extreme difficulties to face in providing staffing for all of our pupils, as our staff will also have to deal with self or family isolation and caring for their own children who are out of school. We will, therefore, as with the previous lockdown period in the spring last year, have to make assessments of those families, which will need the most support.

The government has published information on the definition of critical workers, [Critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/critical-workers-and-vulnerable-children-who-can-access-schools-or-educational-settings) and it would help us if you could let your child's headteacher know if you think your child may fall into this category. You will be informed if your child is to continue to attend school.

All other children will need to stay at home, and we ask that you do not send your child into school from tomorrow onwards.

It will be the parent/carer's responsibility to advise the local authority's special educational needs transport department and taxi operator as you would during a normal school closure.

During this period our duty and responsibility to safeguarding our pupils remains. We will maintain regular check-ins with families needing a bit of extra help and support, just as if the school was open. Please do not feel offended if a member of school staff calls to check-in with you, and to speak to your child. If you have any safeguarding concerns whilst the school is closed, for your child or for any other pupil from the school, please contact the site lead where your pupil attends or identified key worker.

If your child usually receives free school meals, we will also be in touch with more information about how we will continue to provide this.

Headteachers will be responsible for making difficult day to day decisions regarding their ability to keep their schools open and to ensure that staffing levels and premises are safe. They will be in constant communication with relevant parents to ensure they have the most up to date information.



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We understand that this latest news will have an impact on you and your family and it's far from ideal, but we'll continue to keep in touch with any updates if the situation changes. If you want to get in touch to share any concerns, please contact your child's headteacher.

Thank you again for your continued support, and your school will be in touch with further detailed information very quickly.

Yours faithfully,

Julian Scholefield
Chief Executive Officer
Esteem Multi-Academy Trust