

20th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Further to our letter setting out the arrangements for pupils at ASST schools, I am writing with further information.

School Closures

We will be closing Charsfield, Dennington, Fressingfield, Great Whelnetham, Occold, St Peter and St Paul Eye, Stradbroke and Wortham Primary Schools **completely** from Friday 20th of March 2020.

Work will be sent home for children to complete. Please keep checking each school's website as we will add more tasks and activities depending on how long our schools are closed and the health and capacity of staff.

Keyworkers, EHCP pupils and children with assigned Social Workers

We intend to keep All Saints, Laxfield Primary open for key workers, EHCP pupils and those with an assigned social worker. If you are in need of a place and your circumstances qualify, please contact your school office as soon as possible to let them know you will need childcare, and under which provision you qualify.

For the benefit and health of all involved, please be mindful of the information below:

Key workers

At midnight, the government published a list of those parent / carers who can opt to send their child to school where this is available. The link below provides specific details.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

We are incredibly grateful to all of these key workers who are looking after us all. All Saints Schools Trust will provide childcare provision for your child / children for as long as we reasonably can. *It is critical to note, however, that this provision should only be taken up if there are no other alternatives (see guidance).*

In the best interests of your child and school staff, we wish to minimise risk and pupils should only attend where it is absolutely essential.

We will require formal identification/evidence of your key worker role and confirmation from you that you have checked with your employer that your role is critical to the continuation of the public service. Identification could be in the form of a photocopy of your current ID badge or similar.

What is being provided?

We must stress the following: Staff at All Saints Laxfield Primary:

- Have **not been asked to make educational provision** through following the National Curriculum. This has been suspended.
- There **will be disruption for children in consistency** of staff. There will be different staff at All Saints, Laxfield every day from across eight of our schools.

- **We reserve the right to prioritise pupils** based on their need and immediacy to essential services like the NHS.
- Key Worker parents should **only seek to access provision when they cannot make other arrangements**.

All Saints Laxfield will be open to pupils who qualify each day from 9am until 3.30pm initially until Easter and we will then review these hours.

More Information

Please keep checking the Trust Coronavirus website for the latest information:

<https://www.asst.org.uk/coronavirus-advice>

Great Whelnetham

We have offered a base for key worker's children in the Trust, although we are aware that Laxfield is further than we would like from Bury St Edmunds.

We have contacted the DfE and Suffolk County Council to see if we can access alternative childcare provision for Great Whelnetham pupils in neighbouring schools who are able to remain open. This is an active process and we will keep in touch with parents about this.

And Finally...

I think it is important to emphasise that we received the information that schools were closing very late on Wednesday. We have been working quickly to put a solution into place without any official guidance from Government or the Local Authority.

I offer our apologies that this situation feels uncertain. We are working very, very hard with the aspiration to ensure we find solutions for everyone that meet needs across the board. As I have already said, this is an unprecedented situation, both in terms of pace and complexity.

As noted above, we will be in touch when we have other important information to share. We are especially mindful of those families that are entitled to Free School Meals support and arrangements are being put in place to help such families.

I would like to take this opportunity to let you know how proud I am of the way in which everyone in our trust – that is the board, governors, headteachers, staff and pupils have responded to every challenge this situation has thrown at them. It makes me feel confident that, moving forward, no matter how complicated the situation continues to be, things will be okay.

Thank you for your continued support,

Melanie Barrow,
CEO