

Thursday 19th March 2020

Coronavirus: Information following last night's Ministerial statement

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am taking the unusual action of writing to all parents and carers of children who attend an ATLP school. This allows headteachers to concentrate on making specific arrangements following last night's announcement regarding school closures.

I want to reassure you that all ATLP schools are working very hard to support pupils at this difficult time. You are probably aware, schools across England have been ordered to close on Friday for most pupils. The announcement was not specific as to how long this period of closure might last.

ATLP schools are at the heart of our communities. We enjoy excellent relationships with our families. For many students, their schools provide a sense of comfort and safety, structure and routine.

For some of our pupils, they have just discovered that their exams and tests are not going ahead. For many, this will cause frustration and anxiety; I know that headteachers will be writing to these pupils separately. We await further guidance as to what this means, and we will ensure support is put in place for those who need it.

As per the government guidance, we will continue to provide education on site for children of parents or carers categorised as 'key-workers'. The government are due to issue further guidance on which professionals fall into this category. Our current understanding is that this will include:

- Those working in the NHS
- Those working in social care
- Those working in education and not home working
- Other critical workers (emergency services, delivery drivers).

We will also be providing an education for any child who currently is attached to a social worker and to those children with Education, Health and Care Plans (this is a legal document which describes a child's special educational need and the support they require).

Those parents or carers who fall into any of the categories above and wish to take advantage of this, should send their children to school as normal. For parents/carers who fall into the key workers list, and intend to send your child to school, I ask please that you notify the school of your intent no later than 10am on Friday 20th March. Reduced staffing will be in place to support this provision. We will provide clarity on this once we know exact numbers.

What will 'school' look like for everyone else?

Schools will use a variety of ways to ensure your child has work to complete. This will include one or more of the following: online resources, work emailed direct to pupils, work packs being sent home. Teachers will communicate via school email and through normal school communications such as newsletters, social media etc. This will ensure we can maintain learning and communication between pupils, parents/carers and teachers. Feedback will be provided where possible and appropriate.

Throughout this period, free school meals are available to all pupils who are entitled to receive one. Pupils who are not in school, or their parents/carers, may collect one from school during the usual lunchtime hours. The government are looking at issuing meal vouchers in due course. We will update you when we have more details.

Some may say I am biased but, visiting a number of our schools this week, I have been heartened by the dedication and commitment of all to ensure all children are cared for, loved and supported. I thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate uncharted waters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R Gill', written in a cursive style.

Richard Gill
CEO, Arthur Terry Learning Partnership