



St Alban's school closure response (from Monday 23 March)

Dear Parents, I am writing to give you further guidance on the way that we will be operating over the coming weeks.

Firstly, I want to be clear that following the Government directive issued on Wednesday, as from the end of today (Friday 20th March) we will be closed.

Students should if at all possible stay off school to limit the chance of the virus spreading. The Government have indicated that by limiting the number of children who attend schools, settings and colleges, the spread of the virus will reduce and lower the risk to vulnerable individuals in our communities.

We have been directed to continue to provide care (if needed) for a limited number of children - children who are deemed vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the COVID -19 response and cannot be cared for safely at home. As you will be aware, we have contacted you all to maintain a list of these students by a ParentMail.

The Government have defined vulnerable children as children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans. The list of critical workers can be found here:

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

Even with some limited support for parents of vulnerable children and critical workers, the advice from the Government is clear: **if you can safely look after your children during this time of a national emergency, then you should do so.**

Children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

If your child has an EHCP they will be able to attend. This is an offer and there is no requirement for you to send your child to school if you do not need to or wish not to do so. The Government are putting legislation in place to temporarily amend parts of the Children and Families Act 2014, including those relating to special educational provision and health care provision in EHCPs. It is highly unlikely under the circumstances that we will be able to provide the same provision that is in your child's current plan, but we will work with you around suitable arrangements for your child.



Headteacher: Matt Baker

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For children with health needs or underlying health conditions

We will work with parents to make a case by case assessment of the health and safeguarding considerations of children with an EHCP. For some, they will be safer in an education provision. For others, they will be safer at home. We will discuss this with you.

If you are a critical worker

Children with at least one parent or carer identified as a critical worker by the Government can send their children to a school, college or setting if required. The list of critical workers is above.

Even though you may be deemed a critical worker, it is expected that if your child can stay at home, they should do so.

We will not be able to provide an education offer to your child but will be able to provide facilities to enable you to go to work. All normal and usual education activity has been suspended during this emergency period.

If you are not a critical worker and your child is not classified as vulnerable

We appreciate that this is a concerning time for all parents, but we are all being urged to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and directed schools to be open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

We are working closely with the Local Authority and the Headteacher Associations in order to offer a consistent and safe response to the current crisis. The health and safety of our children is everyone's first priority.

Students attending next week will need to report **to reception in full school uniform at 8.50 am (where possible not before this time as the site will be mainly locked)**, following which they will be completing work set by staff on eSchools. There will be a reduced food service at lunchtime. The school day will finish at **3pm**.

Safeguarding

For those students we are expecting – **if you cannot attend on any day please call our absence line.**

For students who remain at home: safeguarding staff will be 'On Call' each day, Monday to Friday and contactable via email, please see the attached rota. This will allow students to raise concerns by emailing safeguarding trained staff, these concerns will be assessed and dealt with on a case by case basis. We will also be making well-being checks on our most vulnerable students to ensure contact is maintained.

Support information and guidance for both parents/carers and students can be found via the main school website: <https://www.st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk/Student-Support/>

Staff contact details are as follows:

Mr Horne (HN) – Designated Safeguarding Lead: jhorne@st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk

Mrs Lawrence (LA) – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead: llawrence@st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk

Mrs Arthur (ART) – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead: harthur@st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk

Mrs Land (LAN) – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead: cland@st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk

Every Blessing at this challenging time

Matt Baker & all the Staff @ St Alban's