



THE PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Part of The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust

20th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carers

Re: Partial opening of the academy to maintain an educational provision

Late last night the government issued further guidance and so we now have greater clarity and in particular which jobs and sectors fall into the key workers' category which I would like to share with you. Whilst we continue to put measures in place the academy will be **closed to all students on Monday 23rd March 2020**.

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/carers to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open **only for those children who absolutely need to attend**.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable and children whose parents/carers are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home. Vulnerable children include 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.

Please, follow these key principles:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent/carer who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.
2. Parents/carers should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
3. Parents/carers should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and **you cannot keep your child safe at home** then your children will be prioritised for education provision:

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

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Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors .

If parents/carers believe they fall within the critical categories above they should:

- confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.
- Then, **if you are planning to send your child** into the academy, please email this intention via email at office@tpc.academy by **9.30am on Monday 23rd March** so we can adequately arrange a provision for the following day, Tuesday. Please state your child's name, year group and your profession.
- If you are keeping your child at home, you do not need to inform the academy.

To allow adequate planning the academy is closed to all students on Monday 23rd March 2020.

Students that do attend will be expected in at the normal time of 8.40am and should report to Palmer Hall. We will finish as normal at 3.20pm and students will be required to wear full school uniform.

Should we be instructed to close the academy completely at any point we will let you know.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Yours faithfully



Mr P Downey
Headteacher