



Alameda Middle School

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23rd March 2020

RE: Closure of Education Settings from Monday 23rd March

Dear parents and carers,

I wanted to contact you today to keep in touch during these times of social distancing. As today is the first day of school closure to the majority of pupils in unprecedented circumstances, there are already a few updates as we continue to review our procedures.

While I wanted to be clear that as a school, we, of course, do want to fulfil our duty to provide care for vulnerable pupils and those who require care in order that their parents can fulfil key worker roles, I want to be clear about the important messages.

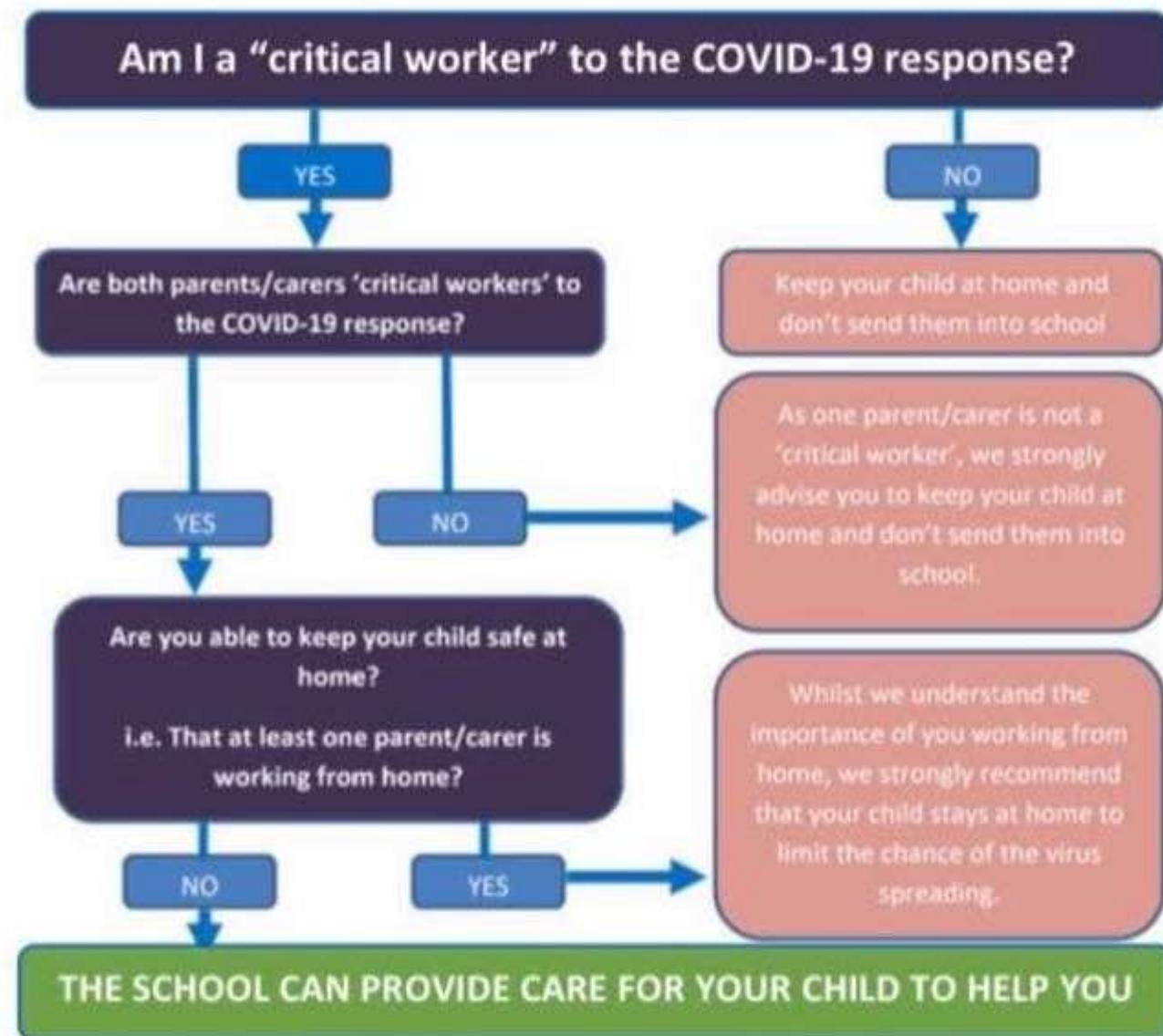
I know that the parents and carers who have requested key worker place for their children at Alameda are those who work in these roles and don't have any other child care options. I know that some have already cancelled their initial requests as they have now received information about shift patterns which means that they will be able to share childcare (this is often the case with teachers and other school staff).

I wanted to share this, which has been publicised heavily this weekend.



While the initial information came out with details of key workers, subsequent information from the Department for Education has emphasized the fact that **even if you are a key worker, if your children can stay at home safely then they should not come to school**. This could mean the other parent or working out shift patterns. The NSPCC has guidance on

its website about leaving children aged 12 and over at home alone. We would only want you to consider this if you were following these guidelines.



This diagram was published by another school and we felt that it was useful.

For pupils in school – some days or every day

Based on the information you provided via Edulink and also via email, we have collated a list of pupils we expect to see in school. For some children, this will be every day and for others, it will be some days according to Key-worker shifts. We are looking at creating a slightly different, more responsive system but for now, however, please can you follow the systems described below.

If you require to have your child added to or removed from this list please contact us by telephone or email office@alamedamiddleschool.org.uk.

Please also contact us if you can tell us days to expect your child so that we can plan for our provision.

Important Attendance – Safeguarding

At present, so that we can be sure that we have all pupils accounted for, **ask that parents/carers of children on our list of children attending school – whether this is every day or on set days, contact the absence line or email pupilsabsence@alamedamiddleschool.org.uk every day that they are not attending.** Even if you have told us that they will only be in on your shift days, we want to be sure that we have accounted for everyone and so, therefore, to save us contacting you, please can you contact every day that your child is not attending.

We have a plan to improve this system, but you will appreciate that this has been an unprecedented event and there is a lot to do. Our priority is ensuring your children are safe.

Please continue to book lunches using the online system. There will not be a breakfast club and it is not possible to provide food at breaktime.

May I remind you that there will not be a school crossing patrol and we have also been informed that there will be no school transport.

I am aware that some of you have sent in individual emails which may have not yet been responded to personally. We will have collated the information but I apologise as I have not been able to ensure all are replied to yet. We are working through these.

Pupils in school – activities and safety

On our first day closed to the majority of pupils, our teachers have worked hard to try to make the experience as positive as possible. We started the day with community time – in circles (socially distanced) to emphasize the importance of safety and to reinforce messages about handwashing and also maintaining a distance of two metres. We also discussed the important role for pupils in school in supporting the whole community.

You will appreciate, that while we have measures in place to reinforce social distancing within school, this is quite a challenge. We continue to seek advice from our health and safety advisor and also use our judgement regarding activities.

We have made the most of the good weather and been out on the field.

For PE based activities, we have made the judgement that changing rooms will be difficult to manage with social distancing and so pupils will do these activities in their normal clothes. Please can you send in trainers. The activities will be adapted.

We have also decided that it is best that pupils do not access locker rooms. We are currently not using all areas of the school and with the reduced numbers of pupils have the following in place:

- Pupils will leave their coats and any other items they do not need for the rest of the day in the room being used for registration in the morning.
- Pupils will keep their bags with them. Fewer pupils in the rooms mean that these are now less of a hazard. They will be placed safely in the rooms.
- Mobile phones can be left in bags. If bags are to be left unattended, mobile phones should be handed in at reception.
- If queuing for reception, however, pupils will need to be mindful of staying 2 metres apart from others.
- To clarify – mobile phones must still be switched off and put away – either in bags when with pupils or at the office.

For pupils at home

Thank you to all of you who have commented about the resources our teachers have added to the website. We will continue to add to this throughout the closure.

As a reminder, this is the link:

[Alameda Middle School - Curriculum](#)

The folders will be updated regularly by our teachers.

You may also be aware Ebooks and resources can be downloaded for free from Bedfordshire libraries

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/libraries

I also wanted to clarify a few points around the current situation as I recognise that this is a real time of uncertainty for our community. Talking to other school leaders via Whatsapp and looking at social media over the weekend, seeing posts made by parents, teachers and other school leaders has made me want to send some thoughts to you about the resources and what we can realistically do at this time.

We currently have no idea of the length of time this may continue for or the true impact of this on our children so all we can do at this time is provide your children with a selection of activities for them to carry out at home. The activities provided will enable them to remain familiar with subject content and keep them occupied. We will continue to add to the activities.

I wanted to be clear that from our perspective at school, there will be no expectation of the minimum or maximum amount of study to complete, we only provide only a recommendation. We do not know your circumstances now or how they may change and appreciate that all parents will want to do their best for their children. I took this suggested timetable from another school's website after speaking to the head as I thought it was useful. They, like us, however, are really clear that this is **only a guide**. As such, please accept this timetable as a guide for you to amend as you see fit or to disregard.

Suggested Daily Schedule

Before 9am	Wake up	Eat breakfast, make your bed, brush your teeth etc.
9am - 10am	Morning exercise	Live PE workouts at 9am every day with The bodycoach TV youtube channel. We will be aiming to add some "Alameda" content too.
10am - 11am	Academic study	Select some of the activities from the website – focus on English, math, science & computing.
11am - 12pm	Academic study	Select some of the activities from the website – focus on foundation subjects.
12pm - 12:30pm	Lunch time	Eat and relax
12:30pm - 1pm	Carry out some chores	Help out at home.
1pm - 1:30pm	Quiet time	Read for pleasure
1:30pm - 3:30pm	Creative time	Eg. Art, DT, music. Either choose activities from the website or any practical activities that interest you linked to these key areas.
3:30pm - 4pm	Exercise	Walk, jog or cycle (in a safe environment). Follow a workout.
4pm - 5pm	Social time (with 2 metre distancing)	Board games, puzzle, reading together, card games.
5pm - 6pm	Dinner time	

Another local Deputy Headteacher wrote this to her school community, "As a society, we have very little time for family time, we spend our lives rushing to and from work, taxiing children to and from clubs, eating in the car on route, let's accept this new challenge with open arms. Let's embrace time with our immediate family and learn to talk to one another and play games with one another in a courteous manner. Do not place unnecessary pressure on your family to be an academic genius, instead trust that your children will catch up and value the skills that can be learned and nurtured by spending time together in your home."

I thought this was a good message and is one that I agree with. Please do not feel pressured by this situation. You are not "home schooling" as this is a very different thing and something you would have chosen and taken time to prepare for.

We have produced paper copies of packs for pupils who do not have access to the internet for home learning. Please contact us by telephone or email at office@alamedamiddleschool.org.uk if you require one of these.

Wishing you all well and thank you for your support. I will continue to be in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "M Warner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Maxine Warner
Headteacher