



**St Michael & St John's RC Primary School**  
**Lowergate, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 1AG**  
**Headteacher: Mrs Zoe Mabbott BEd (Hons) NPQH**

Telephone: 01200 422560  
Fax: 01200 422531  
E-mail: [bursar@ssmj.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:bursar@ssmj.lancs.sch.uk)

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Dear parents/carers,

As you will be aware, the Government have taken the step **of closing schools to the vast majority of pupils in order to help to stem the spread of Covid-19** (Coronavirus). This has been done at extremely short notice and we have been working hard to make plans that ensure the pupils can still take part in meaningful learning activities. These activities have been detailed in recent letters this week that can also be found on our website. From Monday, pupils who will not be in school will be expected to work from home. Children who are eligible to come to school will be offered 'childcare' from our staff which will not be in the form of a normal daily routine at school or lessons.

However, in order to ensure that people designated as 'key workers' (as defined by the Government) can continue to work, the Government has determined that schools should remain open as a centre of childcare. **Attendance for this group of pupils is optional and parents should keep children away if possible.** As the reason for this partial closure of schools is to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, **we would urge parents to make alternative arrangements where possible so minimising contact children will make with each other – the very reason that schools were instructed to 'close' in the first place.** In the words of the Government, '*the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society*'. Please help by keeping your child/ren at home if at all possible.

Schools have also been asked to remain open for pupils who are defined as 'vulnerable' according to Government-determined criteria. Attendance for this group of pupils is expected and you will be notified if your child is in this group at some point today. Again, this group is a small one for the reasons set out above.

If your child does not meet any of these strict criteria, school will not be open for them until further notice. I realise this may be distressing for you that your child cannot come to school and it might prevent you from working if you cannot source other childcare **but we must work together to prevent the spread of this disease as soon as possible in the hope that if we do, normality, or the closest thing to it, can return soon.**

This is a decision that has been taken by the Government and is one that has been designed to prevent unnecessary social contact to help overcome the spread of Coronavirus. Please support your child/ren's learning by enabling them to carry out their learning activities that will be provided by the school.



Thank you for your understanding and patience during this incredibly difficult and uncertain time. Your support is greatly valued. If you have any further queries, or would like anything to be explained in more depth, please contact us on (phone, email).

Please find below a link to the Government list of key workers who may be eligible to still access child care at school. **However, even where there are two key workers in the home, where possible it must be emphasised that every avenue of childcare must be explored before making the decision to send them into school and we realise many parents within the sector will be able to keep children at home or will only require certain days at school as they will not be working every day or alternative childcare may be available on other days.** Anything we can do to keep the group of children as low as possible.

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

I appreciate there are queries about the guidance regarding one key worker but as a school we are trying to fulfil our duty both to stop the spread of the virus whilst providing essential childcare. We all have an important role in this.

“The government are asking schools, colleges, nurseries, child minders and other registered childcare settings to remain open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children where they can.”

**Parents are requested to follow priority one - if it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**

If you believe you and your partner are on the list below **and have no alternative childcare arrangements, you are a single parent on the list with no alternative child care or you have a strong case for needing childcare with only one parent on the list**, then please fill out the form that went out yesterday or call into the office to fill one and return this as soon as possible so we can plan for next week.

Please do not be offended by the level of questions we have been instructed to ask because the message we are constantly getting is one that **it should be a select few group of children**. We will also require confirmation of employment or some kind of identification of workplace because we will be expected to keep records to prove what we are being told by parents over the coming future.

This is a difficult letter to write but I'm sure you understand the reasoning behind it and we are bound by decisions being made at Government level. Please stay safe and remember where I am if you need me.

Kind Regards,  
*Z Mabbott*

Mr Z Mabbott  
Headteacher



Mr M Evans  
Chair of Governors