



# The Federation of The Downs & Northbourne Church of England Primary Schools



Chair of Governors: Dr A Eyden  
Vice Chair of Governors: Rev D Ridley

*"if you have faith as small as a mustard seed...nothing will be impossible."*  
(Matthew: 17 v20)

**The Downs CEP School**  
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Deputy Head: Ms N Luxford  
SENCO: Mrs N Barnes  
Safeguarding Lead: Mr M Turner

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Head Teacher: Mr M Reynolds  
SENCO: Mrs K Morrison  
Safeguarding Lead: Mr M Turner

4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear parents/carers

Over the weekend various meetings were held with head teachers, KCC representatives, local MP's and unions due to the confusion and concern over why some primary schools in Kent were being asked to open, and not others, despite the whole of Kent being placed in tier 4.

Whilst representations have been made, in relation to COVID school closures, it is only the government who can legally request a school to close. However, it continues to be the case that head teachers, with their governing body, can make decision about whether the school closes, or partially closes, in response to staffing shortages, weather or other emergency situations.

We are aware that the government are reviewing the current situation and it is difficult to predict at this moment in time what the decision will be and the potential impact that will have on how we operate over the next few days or weeks.

However, we do need to make some preparations in case we are advised to close to most children. It would be really helpful for us to understand what our provision might look like for critical workers\* and also how you access the internet at home.

To help us be able to make contingency plans, that we can implement quickly, please can ALL parents complete the survey by the end of today (Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January). You will not be able to see all the questions at once, your answer to a question determines what the next question will be. The survey will only take a couple of minutes to complete.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=tEv95ELZVUWRDRte6tq9Z4gLFcQ74w9BoZhnsY9LR6BUOExtWVhYM1ZDN1FENIpdVIlzOVRNMkZLRy4u>

## **\*Critical workers**

### **A few things to note:**

Please see the list at the bottom of this letter to as to whether you are considered to be a critical worker. Please bear in mind that the aim of a COVID related school closure, as advised by the government, is to reduce the spread of COVID-19. This means we would aim to have as few children and as few staff as possible at school.

The advice would be for parents to keep their children at home wherever possible and only use the key worker provision if you have no alternative childcare.



## Attendance

Given the new strain of the virus and the speed at which it is passed on, we appreciate that this is causing anxiety amongst our parents, children and staff. However, in line with government guidance we are currently open to all year groups except for Year 2 (due to staff shortage).

If you feel that it is unsafe to send your child to school, then that is your decision and you will not be fined for this. The decision rests with individual families. I for one will be continuing all I can to ensure the safety of all that do attend school.

We will keep you updated as the situation changes. We will continue to do all we can to support you, I will try and provide as much clarity as I can and my overall aim is to keep infection rates down, support our NHS and Critical workers and ensure that the people we care for most remain well.

Please take care and stay well

Yours sincerely

Miss T Leighton  
Headteacher

*CRITICAL WORKERS – criteria list – please read this before completing the survey*

## 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:

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- 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
- journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting

## 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 outbreak)
- 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
- 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
- waste disposal sectors

