

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

### **Important information regarding student attendance and Free School Meals from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020**

Thank you for the very supportive approach that you have taken during these exceptionally challenging times. We all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. That is why the government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing. The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. **If children can now stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.**

**Whilst we are formally closed from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** onwards we will continue to answer questions and queries via telephone and email.

**Special opening from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March is to provide childcare for the children of key workers and those entitled to specialist support.**

#### **Key Workers**

The government has published a list of those parent/carers who are entitled to send their child to school. The link below provides specific details.

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

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. The list includes the following; Health and social care, education and childcare, key public services, local and national government, food and other necessary goods, public safety and security, transport, utilities, communication and financial services. **Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.** If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision.

We are grateful to all of these key workers who are looking after us all and keeping our essential services going. In return, our staff team are going to provide childcare for your child/children. It is critical to note, however, that this provision should only be taken up if there are no other alternatives (see guidance). **The government has asked parents/carers to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for children who absolutely need to attend.**

**If you are a key worker your child is welcome in school from 8.55am to 3.15pm. Children can arrive and leave at any point during the school day via the main entrance.**

### **Specialist Support Provision**

Those children with safeguarding and welfare needs are also able to attend school.

### **Free School Meals**

If your child is eligible for a free school meal under the benefits system our school will provide a packed lunch. Please email [headteacher@vernonpark.stockport.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@vernonpark.stockport.sch.uk) by 8.30am every day until further notice, if you require a packed lunch. If we do not receive an email a packed lunch will not be ordered. Packed lunches will be ready for collection between 11.30am - 12 noon every day Monday to Friday.

As you may have heard, the government are introducing a voucher scheme to support children eligible for free school meals and more information regarding this will follow.

### **Key Worker Children attending School**

Those children in Reception to Year 2 who are entitled to a free lunch through the Universal Infant Free School Meals must also email [headteacher@vernonpark.stockport.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@vernonpark.stockport.sch.uk) by 8.30am to order a lunch, if required. If we do not receive an email a lunch will not be ordered and you will be required to provide one.

Those children in Nursery and Years 3 to 6 should bring a packed lunch from home. Gentle reminder we are a nut free school.

Vernon Park Primary School will be closed to the majority of students but we are in no way closed in terms of our ongoing care, support and kindness.

Stay safe and take care

Mrs C E Lee