



Luke 10:25-37

**'My neighbour is anyone who
needs my help'**

Headteacher:
Lindsey Hermon PhD

tfh@keevil.wilts.sch.uk
www.keevil.wilts.sch.uk

13th March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

It is impossible to escape the news about the spread of the coronavirus all over the world, and yesterday marked a big day with a number of important announcements of measures that will be taken in different countries including the UK. I therefore thought it was important to up-date you on what we are doing and planning in school currently.

Government advice is still that hand washing and general hygiene is of utmost importance in controlling the spread of the disease. We have, and will continue to, speak to and remind the children of the importance of washing their hands regularly for 20 seconds with soap. We have adapted school routines to ensure that this is happening for all children at key times (particularly around lunch), as well as making use of alcohol hand gel, whilst we still have stocks, at other times (such as around break and snack times).

New advice is that anyone who presents with a new and persistent cough and/or a fever above 37.8°C, should self-isolate for 7 days. If this applies to your child, please just let us know as you would normally if they are unwell and unable to come to school. We will be asking for reasons and details when you phone in about your child being absent, just so that we can monitor any trends.

Despite a number of countries around the world enacting forced and total school closures for a fixed period of time, our government still feels that this would currently not be effective in delaying the spread of covid-19. They have not said never, so it is a case of waiting and seeing. I suspect that we in school will have no more advance warning of this than you, it will be a case of us all finding out from the news. I also assume if it happens, that it will be enacted quickly, much like it has in Ireland. As soon as we know anything we will let you know firstly via text message, and if we have more information to share we will follow this with an email.

Teachers have been asked to prepare some ideas and resources for work that you could do with your child at home if there is a significant period for which the school is closed. This will either be emailed to you or posted on class pages on the school website. We will let you know where you should look for this. I'm sure that you can appreciate that we cannot replicate a full teaching timetable for children remotely, but it would be vital for children to be practising key skills of reading, writing and maths at home and could provide an opportunity for more extended research or project work.

The government's scientific advisers shared yesterday that they are planning on a worst case scenario of 80% of the population contracting the virus, and that we are 10-14 weeks away from the peak number of cases. We are therefore looking at our lives being seriously affected by this pandemic for a number of months to come, quite possibly the rest of the academic year.

Even if we don't reach that worst case scenario, it is clearly going to affect a significant number of us.

Therefore it is important that you understand that even if the government is directing schools to remain open there could be occasions in which we are forced to close as we will be unable to function safely for the children. These situations are:

- If there are not enough staff members to run the school safely – we are modelling on a bare minimum of 4 staff who can lead classes plus at least 2 extra to provide support for first aid, admin, break cover etc. If we drop below that level I would not feel that it was safe to open the school to children.
Staff are asked to inform before 7am if they unable to work that day due to illness, in the event of there not being enough staff to open one day you will be informed by text message around 7:30am. Further information will follow via email.
- If we are unable to keep the school properly cleaned on a daily basis – due to the importance of hygiene in controlling the spread of the disease.

We will check in with cleaning staff and companies on a daily basis and inform you as soon as possible via text and/or email if we are going to need to close for a period due to being unable to guarantee that the school will be clean for the following day.

There are also circumstances that may force us to close:

- If Mrs B's is unable to provide school dinners and does not give us enough warning for us to let you know in time – school staff will not be in a position to provide dinners for children.
We are in contact with Mrs B's to organise contingency plans with them, and if they reach a position of not being able to supply meals we would look to you sending your child to school with a packed lunch. We will keep you informed via text and email regarding this.

Even if we are able to keep open throughout this crisis, I find it hard to imagine that there won't be times when our usual provision is affected:

- A significant reduction in school staff may well lead to timetabling changes and children not necessarily experiencing all of the learning activities that they are used to. We will always do our best in this regard, but there are circumstances when there could be unavoidable changes.
- A significant reduction in school staff could also lead to Breakfast Club and After School Club being cancelled – we will need to focus those staff who are able to work on our core activities during the school day. We appreciate how disruptive this is for people, and it would always be a last resort to do this.
We will let people know by text message and/or email with as much warning as possible if it is necessary to cancel either club.
- Cancelling swimming and gym trips – this could be due to lack of school staff, Chandlers being unable to provide transport, or the pool or gym being closed.
We will inform you by text message if this occurs.
- Beeline and/or A&G Transport being unable to provide school buses.
We are in conversation with both companies to establish means of them communicating this information with us. School buses are organised by Wiltshire Council, so this is a slight grey area. We will inform you by text message as soon as we know if buses are not running.
- If PH Sports and/or Acorn Sports are unable to supply staff we will cancel after school sports clubs.
We will inform you of this via text message as soon as we know.
- Peripatetic music staff are unable to work – we will ask these staff to contact you directly regarding this.

Our hope throughout all of this is to keep open and functioning as normally as possible, but I hope you can understand all of the many logistics and constraints that could affect this at times. I also hope that you trust that we always have the children's best interests at the heart of all we do, and every decision that we make is about keeping them safe and giving them the best education that we can facilitate.

Due to the dynamic nature of the situation, communication is vital. Due to the speed and efficiency of electronic communication we will be reliant on using text messages and emails throughout this. Therefore it is more important than ever that you ensure that all contact details we hold in school for you are correct. Accompanying this letter is another to which your 'data sheet' is attached. We ask you to check, amend and return this to school on Monday 16th March. We appreciate the quick turn around of this, but we need to be confident that you are receiving all of our messages given the urgent information that some of these could contain.

Within school we are meeting, discussing and adapting plans on a daily basis, and we will always keep you informed of any changes to any of the above.

As ever, please do not hesitate to contact us regarding any questions or concerns that you may have. Hopefully through us all working together, we can keep as many of us as possible fit and healthy.

Best wishes,
Lindsey Hermon