

Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell  
*ST JAMES CE PRIMARY SCHOOL*

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*Headteacher: Mrs C McGregor*

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I wrote to you yesterday to outline that school will be closed from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March as part of the government's plans to slow the spread of COVID-19.

This will apply to all children unless they are children whose parents are key workers or whom we deem vulnerable. In order for us to plan for the provision we will be able to offer, I must insist that parents return the form we sent out yesterday regarding key workers by **12pm today** so we can finalise our decisions.

***I must make it clear that you MUST NOT send your child in on Monday unless we have confirmed with you that we can offer your child a place.***

We will make every effort to prioritise who we offer places to and ensure we have adequate staff to cover this. We are working with limited staff numbers and need to make sure we can safely look after all children. As the updated guidance came out last night around key workers (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>), it would appear that if one family member is a key worker, then school will consider whether we can offer a place. However, it is also very clear that if the child can remain at home and the other parent is available to do this, then this needs to be the case. Many parents working in these sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home and every child who can be cared for at home should be. This is to limit the spread of infection and to ensure the children who we do take are protected, and also the staff working with the children.

Also, many parents will not work full time hours and it will be expected that parents look after their children whilst they are not at work so we can offer provision for as many children as possible. If you are allocated a place, we will contact you and request which days and times you will require.

It may be that over time, we can extend our provision and we will of course let you know this. However, we may also be in a situation whereby we can longer offer school provision if staffing levels become unsafe to continue.

We are working our hardest to sort all of this out and ask that you bear with us during this time. I understand that this is an incredibly stressful situation for all involved, including school staff, and now more than ever, we need to work together to protect everyone.

I urge everyone who is able to stay at home to do so and use the social distancing strategies outlined by the government. It is going to take a country wide effort, with everyone onboard, to stop the spread of this virus and to protect the most vulnerable in society, whilst also ensuring those who are working on the front line can continue to do so.

Please stay safe and look after yourselves.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mrs McGregor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and 'G'.

Mrs McGregor  
**Headteacher**