

# SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Prittlewell Chase, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0RG  
(01702) 606200 enquiries@shsb.org.uk www.shsb.org.uk

Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents,

Thank you again for the supportive approach that you have taken during these exceptionally challenging times. The letter sent to you yesterday outlines how we will continue to provide for our pupils during the closure period.

Please ensure that you read this letter all the way through, there are some vital 'Actions for Parents' further down that we need a rapid response to.

First of all a reminder that, for the vast majority of children, **all schools will be closed as of the end of the school day today (Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March)** until further notice.

Parents have already received information regarding learning at home and provision for the vast majority of pupils who will not be in school for the time-being, but this email is to let parents know about the plans we have to provide for the children of 'key workers' and those pupils that are classed as most vulnerable.

### **Plans for Childcare Provision: on-site supervised activity**

From Monday (March 23<sup>rd</sup>) there will be an offer of childcare **from 8.30 am to 2.00 pm** for pupils who need it on any given day (see below for a definition of 'need' and for children who are eligible).

Meals will be available: breakfast will be offered between 8.30 am and 9.00 am; lunch will be offered at 1.00 pm.

**This will not be a 'drop-in' facility.** Pupils' attendance will **ONLY be by advance arrangement** or, in emergencies, with agreement from the school. Those who opt in are expected to attend or notify the school if unwell or if there has been a change of circumstances. Those parents who need this facility only on some days of the week will be asked to indicate, in advance, which days their child will attend.

We may not be providing the normal pupil:staff ratios, but we will ensure that all provision is fully risk-assessed to ensure a safe environment for all pupils at all times. A guiding principle will always be in place that the safety of the pupils is paramount; if we are unable to provide safe care for any



child due to staff shortages or lack of expertise, we will reduce our provision until we can make it safe to do so.

Pupils attending school will be expected to wear school uniform (blazer *not* required); during holiday periods, they may wear their own clothes.

**Please note that this is not normal school provision;** it is an emergency childcare initiative which will be safe and enjoyable for everyone involved, but will not be the equivalent of normal school in terms of the educational content of each day. Pupils on site will be expected to continue with the work set for them on Show My Homework in the same way as those pupils who will be remaining at home.

**Eligible Children:** The government has now provided a comprehensive list of 'key workers' within the guidance published last night, which can be found at the following link:

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

Please note that the guidance refers to 'essential' workers for many of the critical groups. As an example, local NHS trusts have already identified groups of workers who can work from home, so simply working for the NHS does not qualify a family for these arrangements.

The guidance also clarifies 'vulnerable children' as those, "with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans."

If you believe that your child is not covered by the 'vulnerable' category above, but that they will need extra support beyond what you can provide at home, please contact the school as soon as possible by emailing [enquiries@shsb.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@shsb.org.uk). We will also be contacting families where the school's judgement is that they should be offered some provision, but do not currently qualify.

Please also note the guiding principles within the information:

- ***If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be;***
- *If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable, or has a parent who is a critical worker, then on-site provision will be available for them;*
- *Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying health conditions;*
- *Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.*

In order to best protect both children and staff during this time, we will be asking that on-site supervision is requested *only* in circumstances where it is *essential* and there are no other alternatives. Although having one 'critical worker' in the household may qualify your child for this provision, we would expect that if there is a non-critical worker in the home capable of basic childcare during the day that guiding principle 1 should be the starting point for families. The guidance reaffirms this stance with the following statement:

"Many parents working in these critical sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. **Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.**"

We would ask that all families consider the impact on themselves, their families and others in terms of the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) before requesting childcare.

#### **ACTION FOR PARENTS:**

- Please complete the form on the link below **ONLY** if you believe that you qualify for the childcare arrangements.
- **Please complete this form by 5.00pm today (Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March) to let us know if you will require childcare provision on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March, so that we can plan staff arrangements accordingly.** Once we have everything in place for Monday, we will start gathering information for Wednesday onwards.
- If you are booking provision, please indicate on the form if your child will need breakfast and/or lunch. We expect normal arrangements for paid/free school meals to be in place.

We will be asking your child to bring in formal identification of your 'key worker' role. Proof of being an 'essential' worker may be required from your employer.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=F02cEzB0ukOxTHxXX5MED8rNEcK4YW5KvPYtuR2wJlhUM1BSQTJLRVVJQkhQQ0hWSDQxSE5QMkUzNy4u>

**Free School Meals:** There will be a number of children who are entitled to a free school meal who are not eligible for the childcare arrangements. There is work underway for a national voucher scheme for children whilst they are off school, but whilst this is being put in place, please indicate if you need support with this by emailing [enquiries@shsb.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@shsb.org.uk).

We appreciate that there is a lot of information to digest in this letter, so please ask any questions that you might have by email on [enquiries@shsb.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@shsb.org.uk).

Yours sincerely



Robin M Bevan  
Headteacher