



5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

## RE: School Closures 2021

Following the Government announcement relating to the closure of schools from tomorrow I am writing to inform you of our school response.

**To enable school leaders and staff to effectively put in place arrangements to accommodate key worker and vulnerable learners, and to implement our remote learning contingency plan, school will be closed to all pupils today – Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January.** I sincerely apologise for any inconvenience this may cause but this is necessary due to the very short notice we have received in relation to this period of national closures.

### Key Worker/Vulnerable Children School Places

Pupils who accessed a key worker/vulnerable child school place throughout the period of school closure from April to July will be reallocated a place in school **from Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January**. We will be in contact with those families to confirm the arrangements for key worker places in a separate communication later today. If your circumstances have changed, and you now require a key worker place for your child, please contact the school office to request a 'key worker place' form. We will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible about this request but it could take up to 48 hours. I appreciate these are challenging times and you may require childcare to enable you to fulfil your critical worker commitment; we will do all we can to support your family but there is a limit on the number of children we can safely accommodate in school during this lockdown period. Where we are unable to allocate a place we will work with the Trust and Local Authority to accommodate your child in another provision. To this end, if your circumstances have changed, and you no longer require the place your child previously accessed please inform the school office to allow us to allocate this place to another family.

If you have a child in reception and you require a key worker place for your child, please contact the school office. Your request will be processed in line with the information detailed above. Where your child has an older sibling in school, who has a key worker place, we will guarantee a place for your child in reception.

### Home Learning

From 8:30am on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January, learning will be available, online, for all pupils through the school website. This can be found by following the 'Menu' -> 'Learning from Home' tab. Class teachers will also be in contact via SeeSaw.

A copy of our school 'Guidance for Home Learning Document' can be found on the school website. We have carefully considered the many comments we received relating to home learning during the previous period of school closure. We understand the limitations parents have when educating their





child at home and appreciate the challenges home learning can bring. With this in mind, we will endeavour to provide as many pre-recorded videos of teachers explaining new concepts as possible. Remember we are here for you and you can contact teachers via year group emails or See Saw if you have any questions. Please be mindful that most teachers will be responsible for teaching key worker groups on a rota basis and therefore it may occasionally be a different member of staff who responds to your message.

There will be an expectation that children engage in home learning and work is uploaded to SeeSaw or the class email for teachers to comment upon. If you are unable to access SeeSaw or require paper home learning packs please contact the school office by email [info@manstonstjames.co.uk](mailto:info@manstonstjames.co.uk). If you could title your email with your child's year group and 'home learning' (e.g. Y5 home learning) this will enable us to respond to your email more efficiently. It is important that all children continue to access an education. As a guide to the expectations of remote learning, the government have asked that that primary schools provide children with a minimum of three hours home learning daily. We will do all we can to support you with this.

As well as contact in relation to home learning, teachers will conduct 'keeping in touch' calls and emails. Should you need any additional support in between these calls please contact us via seesaw, email or telephone.

#### Means Tested Free School Meals

If your child accesses means tested free school meals, we will be in contact regarding meal arrangements for the duration of school closures. We await further guidance from the government and our school meal provider on this matter.

I appreciate that the announcement this evening may have come as a shock after weeks of being told that primary schools were safe and would remain open for all children. I look forward to the day when all children can return to school, play together, learn together and be together as a school rather than individual bubbles. I am hopeful that some respite is on the horizon, in the form of immunisation, but in the meantime we must all continue to play our part to keep our community and loved ones safe.

Take care and remember we are here for you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashleigh Dunn'.

Ashleigh Dunn  
Headteacher