

20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing with a further update to confirm the arrangements for the continuity of education for pupils who will be remaining at home and the plans that are now in place for those who are entitled to access provision in school as either the children of 'keyworkers' or who are from 'vulnerable groups'.

We can confirm that Sheffield Park Academy will close at lunchtime today (13:30). This is in line with the Government's response to the unprecedented situation that we are facing.

As instructed by the Government, the closure will be for all students except those whose parents are key workers and those children who are our most vulnerable. The Government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and schools will remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

▪ **Continuity of Education**

To support students in accessing the Microsoft Office 365 Suite and MS Teams, there are comprehensive instructions on the academy website and they can also access instructional videos on YouTube. Given our expectation that students will be using online learning to a significantly greater degree than ever before, we have also posted links to online safety advice on the academy website, which we encourage all parents and students to access. We have also added an ICT support help-desk button to our website so that anyone having difficulties in accessing any of the learning materials or websites can easily seek support.

▪ **Provision for the children of 'key workers' and those in 'vulnerable groups'**

If you think that you fall into the 'key worker' category, you should confirm with your employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, your specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

Thank you to those parents who have already contacted us at info@sheffieldparkacademy.org to inform us of your keyworker status. If you are a keyworker and you have not yet managed to contact us, please can you do so as soon as possible.

Vulnerable children include:

- Looked after children
- Those who have a social worker
- Those with an Education Health and Care Plan

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If you believe your child falls into this latter category and you have not heard from us yet, please contact the academy safeguarding team using the contact details (telephone and email) on the academy's website - www.sheffieldpark-academy.org.

We will be working in partnership with Sheffield Springs Academy to put in place a provision that gives the children who are eligible a range of engaging activities to participate in, as well as ensuring that they are both well looked after and that they enjoy their time in school.

Key questions that you might have:

Where will the provision be?	The children of keyworkers and vulnerable children from BOTH Sheffield Park and Sheffield Springs Academies can attend our provision at SHEFFIELD PARK ACADEMY .
When does it begin?	The provision will be available from Monday 23 rd March until further notice (including throughout the Easter holidays, EXCEPT FOR THE BANK HOLIDAYS on Friday 10 th April and Monday 13 th April).
What are the start/finish times?	The provision will run weekdays from 9:00 until 15:00.
How do I know if my child is eligible?	If you are a key worker, please email info@sheffieldparkacademy.org with your child's details and the details of your role and we will confirm their eligibility. If your child is in the latter group, the academy will have contacted you. If you have not heard from us yet, please contact the academy safeguarding team using the contact details (telephone and email) on the academy's website www.sheffieldpark-academy.org .
Where should my child go when they arrive?	Students should report to Sheffield Park Academy reception at 9:00. It is important that they are on time as reception will not be staffed all day.
Who will be looking after my child?	A range of teaching and pastoral staff from both schools will be working on a rota basis. A member of the senior leadership team will be on-site each day as well as a first-aider.
What should my child wear?	Students attending do not need to wear school uniform. We recommend that they wear comfortable clothing and footwear that is suitable for a range of activities.
Will food be provided?	Yes - toast will be provided first thing as well as a mid-morning snack and lunch. Students should bring any additional drinks or snacks that they wish to consume.
What activities will they do?	We are in the process of arranging a number of activities including sports, arts & crafts, reading, computing and cookery. If the weather allows, we also hope to make use of the academy's extensive grounds for outdoor activities.

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What if my child doesn't need to access the provision every day?	That is absolutely fine. We are here to support you and appreciate that you might work shifts or have to go into work at short notice. Please use the info@sheffieldparkacademy.org email address to keep us up to date.
I am a key worker, but I don't need/want to use the provision.	We understand that some families who meet the criteria may prefer to make alternative childcare arrangements using family members or friends to provide care and support children with home learning.

If you have any further questions or wish to discuss the provision in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@sheffieldparkacademy.org.

▪ **Examinations**

At the time of writing, there has been no further information released by the Government in relation to the GCSE or A-Level exams. We will update those students in Years 11 and 13 who are affected as soon as we can by sending a letter via parents' mobile numbers or email addresses.

▪ **Free school meals arrangements**

We are providing interim solutions for next week whilst we await further details from the Government about their proposed voucher scheme. Any parent whose children are eligible for free school meals who wishes to collect a free school meal can do so from the school reception at **SHEFFIELD PARK ACADEMY** daily between 12noon and 13:00pm from Monday 23rd March to Friday 27th March. Please can you email info@sheffieldparkacademy.org if you wish to take up this offer, so that we can ensure that sufficient food is prepared.

Once we are in receipt of further information about the Government's longer-term plans for the provision of free school meals or vouchers in lieu of free school meals, we will write to you to let you know the details.

▪ **Maintaining an effective dialogue between school and home**

We will continue to update you regularly on all of these issues and would ask you to bear with us. Please monitor your texts and emails carefully as some of our communications may require a response.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support in this most challenging of times. It has been both humbling and inspirational to work in the academy this week and to see the students behaving in such a mature, considerate way. As their parents, you can be very proud of them indeed.

Please continue to follow the Government advice and stay safe. On behalf of all of the staff, we wish you and your families all the very best of health for the coming weeks and months.

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Sheffield Park Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Yours faithfully,

Mr C. Dillon
Executive Principal

Mrs D. McShane
Principal

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