

Dear Parents,

I hope that you have been able to enjoy the sunshine during the Easter fortnight and that as far as possible you have been able to relax and have a break from a more pressured routine if even for a day or so!

We have, as many of you know, re-started posting the online learning materials on our Learning Platform to guide you. Thank you for all the feedback we have received via email and via the platform. It is great to see that you and the children are finding the suggested activities helpful and enjoyable. We have loved seeing and finding out about what the children are doing as we miss them very much! We do also realise that it is not at all easy trying to do home learning with all of your work and other responsibilities. Do ask for our help and guidance and know that we are not expecting you to be able to replicate school at home!

Here is a reminder of how to access materials and how to contact us.

The Learning Platform, It's Learning can be found from the front page of our website:

www.orchard.surrey.sch.uk

You can contact the teachers in your child's year group through:

reception@orchard.surrey.sch.uk (Reception)

Y1@orchard.surrey.sch.uk (year one)

Y2@orchard.surrey.sch.uk (year two)

and for general enquiries to the office or to myself:

admin@orchard.surrey.sch.uk or 020 8979 2945

For serious safeguarding concerns:

dsl@orchard.surrey.sch.uk

School Closure and ongoing restrictions

I know that you will be anxious to know when the children might be coming back to school and how this might be managed. If you heard Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson's speech, you will know that there is **no date** at the moment and we do not know when the five criteria for end of the restrictions will be met. I am attaching a script of his speech at the end of this letter in case you did not hear him speak. Unfortunately, some of the press have included stories of children's return in May or June but we simply do not know at this stage and Head Teachers are not privy to any information that the general public does not already have through the daily Government Briefings.

We do know, that at whatever time the children come back to school, we will need to adapt our normal plans and expect the children to be at different stages in their learning. We will adjust induction and transition arrangements and have to be flexible and quick to respond once we know when schools will re-open. We are also really aware that the children are currently experiencing a

very strange and different world and at times this is fun because they can spend so much time with their parents, and at times this is frightening or sad. We are absolutely committed as a staff team in ensuring we manage the children's return to school as sensitively and carefully as possible to ensure we meet the children's emotional and learning needs to the best of our abilities. I will continue to write regularly and, of course, write as soon as we are informed about a return to school.

Parents of children due to start in Reception in September or to go to year 3 in September

I know that for parents of children who are due to join Reception in September and for parents of current year 2 children this is a particularly worrying time. Again, induction arrangements are being made with flexibility and these extraordinary circumstances in mind. Be reassured that every child and every school in the country is in the same position and we are very aware that the children will need a different process and an adjusted curriculum. Once we have all the acceptance forms for next year's intake we will have contact information to write to you as a whole group and keep you informed. In the mean-time I am posting a letter for all prospective Year R parents on our website with a link on the front page.

Orchard fundraisers

I have been thrilled to hear about so many of our children being resilient, resourceful and kind. Thank you for telling us! We are so proud of the children and how they (and you!) are managing. It is really inspiring to hear. Also, it has been lovely when I have been able to do a walk after school, to see children's drawn and painted rainbows in the windows of houses around Molesey.

We have parents who are Paramedics and parents who are frontline NHS staff, Police, Carers, and parents who work in Local Government, Schools, public transport, and shops. The staff and I want to join you in thanking them all and anyone working at the moment in public service.

This week I heard about Sophie in Holly class cycling 10km on her bike round and round her back garden to raise money for NHS charities. She was inspired by Captain Tom Moore, (as we all have been!), and so she wanted to raise £100. So far Sophie has raised £630!

I have also heard about Eloise (Oak class) and her sister Annabelle drawing 18 rainbows (so far) to raise money for the Surrey Care Trust. They have raised £480 and the Surrey Care Trust is going to do an article in their next newsletter.

Well done to these children! Congratulations!

The staff team are preparing a staff photo/video message for all the children- so look out for that in the next week or so...

Keep in touch and do ask us for any help. Thank you very much for all your ongoing support and the effort you are putting in to supporting your children's learning and other activities.

With very best wishes,

Carol Rusby

Gavin Williamson speech on COVID-19 response

Education Secretary on the Government's response to the outbreak of coronavirus and support for disadvantaged pupils on remote learning

Published 19 April 2020

From:

[Department for Education](#) and [The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP](#)

Delivered on:

19 April 2020 (Transcript of the speech, exactly as it was delivered)



I'd like to welcome you to today's briefing from Downing Street.

I am joined by Jenny Harries, the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, who will be sharing with you the latest detailed data on coronavirus.

On any normal Sunday afternoon, many of you would have been out with your family and friends enjoying the sunshine. And tomorrow, many children would be going to school for the first time after a two-week break.

But these are not normal times and we are asking you to stay at home, so can I start by thanking you for all the sacrifices that you've already had to make and that you continue to make.

I know this has not been easy. But it's the surest way that we have to protect the NHS and to save lives.

I can report, through the Government's ongoing monitoring and testing programme, as of today 482,063 tests for coronavirus have been carried out in Great Britain, including 21,626 test carried out yesterday.

120,067 people have tested positive - that's an increase of 5,850 cases since yesterday. 18,118 people are currently in hospital with coronavirus in the UK, compared to 18,006 on 17 April.

And sadly, of those hospitalised with the virus, 16,060 have now died. That's an increase of 596 fatalities since yesterday.

We mustn't forget that behind every single statistic there is a heart-breaking story and my sincere condolences go out to everyone has lost someone that they love.

These are challenging times for all of us and each of us has a role to play in fighting this virus. Those who are working in the NHS, those doctors, nurses, porters, cleaners and ambulance crews. They're all doing an amazing job and are truly heroic in the part they are playing in supporting every one of us in this nation.

But today I would also like to say how enormously grateful we are to those who are working in our nurseries, schools colleges, universities and children's services.

I am profoundly grateful for the vital role they are providing in our communities.

They have been keeping schools and nurseries open – including over the Easter holidays - so that our most vulnerable children and children of critical workers can continue to be supported and they can be cared for.

People are anxious to know when we are going to relax restrictions and when schools are likely to be fully back and open again. Of course, I want nothing more than to get schools back to normal, make sure that children are sat around learning and experiencing the joy of being at school.

But I can't give you a date, because before we do, we need to meet five tests.

First, we must protect the NHS's ability to cope and be sure that it can continue to provide critical care and specialist treatment right across the whole of the UK.

Second, we need to see the daily death rates from coronavirus coming down.

Third, we need to have reliable data that shows the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels.

Fourth, we need to be confident that testing capacity and PPE are being managed, with supply able to meet not just today's demand, but future demand.

And, fifth, and perhaps most crucially, we need to be confident any changes we do make will not risk a second peak of infections.

When we can be sure we have met these five essential points, we can think about getting children into schools again - learning, mastering new ideas and being with their friends once more.

We will work with the sector to consider how best to reopen schools, nurseries and colleges when the time is right.

Our first priority has always been protecting the wellbeing of children and young people, but particularly those vulnerable young people with special educational needs or a social worker.

Schools are open for them and we're working to make sure those who should attend do so.

Places are available for children of critical workers too. With up to 130,000 children in school every single day, schools are helping keep the country moving.

And we are asking our local authorities and schools to ensure every vulnerable child knows that their school is there to support them, that systems are in place to keep in touch with those children who are unable to attend because of health reasons.

I know that families of seriously ill and disabled children are particularly worried at this time and I'm grateful to all staff who are working so hard to support their education, health and care - particularly those in special schools and residential care homes.

Young people who have left care or are just about to, whether that's from a foster family or residential care, are really vulnerable right now. So I am asking local authorities to ensure that no one has to leave care during this difficult time.

The £1.6 billion of additional funding announced yesterday will help local authorities give care leavers, and other vulnerable groups, the support that they need at this difficult time.

To further protect children from harm, we are continuing to support Childline and working with NSPCC to expand and promote the adult helpline by providing them with an extra £1.6 million.

This means children have someone to call and more adults will be able to raise concerns and seek advice about the safety and wellbeing of any child that they're worried about.

Like the rest of the population, all our teachers have had to adapt very quickly to new ways of working. They have had to move resources online, work remotely, change the way they support their students as well as one another.

I am immensely grateful to them and to everyone who has offered their support, including those who have made resources freely available for schools, parents and pupils to use.

We have already published an initial list of high quality online educational resources including how to support physical and mental wellbeing and materials for teaching children with special educational needs and disabilities.

In yet another example of how we are at our best when we work together, some of our leading state schools have collaborated to open The Oak National Academy, which will be launched online tomorrow (20 April).

This is a totally new initiative, led by 40 brilliant teachers who have assembled video lessons and resources for any teacher in the country to make use of if they wish to do so. 180 video lessons will be provided each week, across a broad range of subjects, for every year group from Reception through to Year 10.

I recognise all the challenges that families will be facing at the moment and we are determined to support parents who are helping their children learn from home. I think we all know how difficult that can be.

The BBC has developed resources for families as part of the most comprehensive education package in their history, available on TV and online from tomorrow morning.

And to make sure as many children as possible can access online learning, we are ordering laptops to help disadvantaged young people who sit key exams next year.

We will also provide laptops and tablets for those children with social workers and care leavers to help them stay in touch with the services they need, keeping them safe and supporting home learning.

And if disadvantaged secondary school pupils and care leavers who are preparing for exams do not already have internet connections, we'll provide free 4G routers to get them connected while schools are closed.

We are also working with major telecommunications providers to exempt certain educational resources from data charges, so that this does not add to household expenses that may already be very stretched at this moment.

Before I finish, I would like to applaud the remarkable way our education community has responded to this outbreak. I am enormously proud and inspired by the incredible spirit they are showing.

Schools are supporting their communities in every way, from preparing food parcels to sharing their facilities with local hospitals. Colleges are manufacturing and donating equipment and universities are working flat out to develop diagnostic tests and, of course, a vaccine which will help us beat this invisible enemy.

And to any young people watching, I wanted to say to you how sorry I am that you have had your education disrupted in this way.

I know how hard it must be and I would like to thank you for making the adjustments you have had to make.

I know you will be missing your friends, your teachers and your lessons. I want you to know that you are an important part of this fight too and I cannot thank you enough for all that you are doing.

This global pandemic is the biggest threat that this country has faced in modern times. If we all continue to work together, as we have been, and if we continue to stick to the advice of our experts, we will come out the other side and be able to begin the task of rebuilding our communities.

I would like now to hand over to Jenny and then we will take some questions.

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