



Nine Mile Ride
School

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*Learning for life - together we discover, nurture, achieve and shine.
Respect, Resourcefulness, Resilience, Reflectiveness*

20 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: School Closure

It is with a heavy heart that I write to confirm that Nine Mile Ride Primary will close at the end of today for the majority of our pupils and families for the foreseeable future; however, as Headteacher I am wholly committed to my civic and professional duty to keep the school operational so that we might provide care as instructed by our government.

The full list of key workers has been published by the Cabinet Office (click [here](#) to access) and those who meet this published definition should contact the school office if you have not already done so. As Headteacher, I will not be the arbiter of who is classed as a key worker, I will simply follow Department for Education and Public Health England guidelines; however, please be aware that the government mandate makes it very clear:

'As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. That is why the government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing. And the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading. That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend. Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.'

Therefore, if there is a way your child **can** stay at home they **must** stay at home to limit the spread of infection and that schools remain open only **"for those students who absolutely need to attend."**

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, 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; however, the default position for those pupils is to be kept at home, wherever possible.

For our pupils who are eligible for free school meals we will write separately regarding this ongoing provision. This will most likely be in the form of vouchers for local supermarkets/shops. The Government has formally committed to funding this and I hope that this firm and clear commitment will provide immediate reassurance to families whilst the school is closed.

All other students who do not fall into these identified groups, in line with governmental decision, must remain at home.

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Our vision at NMR starts with the phrase 'Learning for Life' and in these uncertain times, adapting to this new situation is a learning curve for us all, not least the pupils. Having a growth mindset, (namely resilience) will be a key skill to have as we rise to the challenges ahead on this unprecedented journey.

Away from this initial reactionary phase, I know that the teachers and staff of NMR will absolutely thrive in developing and delivering rich and creative learning opportunities in this new way and whilst I know that there is no substitute for being in a classroom with a teacher, NMR has been proactive in planning home learning opportunities for our pupils.

Home Learning

For all our pupils who are to be at home from Monday, the Home Learning offer below is available to you.

I am aware that the prospect of home schooling may be overwhelming and juggling work/family commitments will not be easy; therefore there are no expectations for how much or how little pupils engage/do not engage in the learning that has been uploaded to Google Classroom. This resource is only a support to be used if you wish to do so.

Activities will be uploaded weekly and this will take the form of:

- Daily reading, with an additional follow-up task;
- Two writing activities;
- Three maths activities;
- Daily fitness;
- Five Creative Curriculum activities (some may last longer than a week).

We also have an Inclusion area where pupils can access:

- Keep fit;
- Creative Ideas;
- English/Maths;
- Occupational Therapy/Sensory/Nurture.

If pupils do wish to access Google Classroom, it may be helpful to set up a weekly timetable that suits your family and adds structure and routine. It may be helpful to consider:

1. Your family circumstances. If you have one computer, three siblings and parents or carers that work from home, take this into account;
2. Be flexible. Things change and home schooling isn't an exact science. If things aren't working according to the timetable - change the timetable.

Before 9am	Wake up/breakfast
9am-10am	Morning workout
10am-11am	Academic Time
11am-12pm	Creative Time
12pm	Lunch
1pm-2pm	Quiet Time
2pm-3pm	Academic Time
3pm-4pm	Activity Time

There are many examples online that may be useful and here is an example that may spark some ideas.

Our Educational Psychology team offer the following well-being tips for families which I share with you below:

- Talk to your children, and answer their questions. Ask about what they have heard about the virus and the situation so that you can correct possible misconceptions and reassure them.
- Avoid being too immersed in media coverage. Be mindful of the amount of things you are reading and watching, including social media – as this may add to worry and anxiety. Consider a few updates every day

from trusted sources.
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- Remember that people react differently to significant events. Some people – adults and children – may feel worried, some excited, some nothing much at all. Be reassured that different reactions are normal and ok.
- If your child seems worried, it may be good to distract themselves with something that takes their mind off their worries. You might also want to set aside 10-15 minutes each day for them to talk about any worries, and to reassure them.
- Remember to keep things positive and give children hope. For example, tell children that now many people are working to make this better and that even though it is serious, everyone is doing their best to help people.
- Try to keep familiar routines. Well-known routines in everyday life provide security and stability.
- Do nice things together, and keep active. Make a plan and suggest some regular family times where you can play games, do some exercise together, or do other things that you know most of you like. Try to find a good balance between times together, and screen time.
- Keep in good contact with family and friends (via FaceTime, Skype WhatsApp etc.; following NHS guidance on ‘social contact’). This will help children connect with others and know that others are thinking about them. It will also reassure them that others are well.

School Learning

NMR will be open from 8:40am-3pm Monday to Friday for all children of families that meet the government guidelines.

We will be running two classes:

1. Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1
2. Key Stage 2

Both classes will be led by our current staff who will facilitate the online learning offer via Google Classroom. During this time, I would ask for pupils to wear school uniform and bring PE kits into school as this will remind them of our behaviour expectations and offer routine and consistency.

We will continue with our day to day safe practice which includes reminding pupils to wash their hands regularly (using soap and water or alcohol sanitiser); cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue; avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

It seems surreal that school will be closing at the end of today indefinitely; however, I am going to try and keep the weekly newsletter going so that we are able to keep in touch during our closure.

I fully believe that it is an honour and privilege to be able to carry out my duty and help support our local community throughout this crisis and want to take this opportunity to thank you all for being so supportive and hope that you and your loved ones stay safe and healthy during these uncertain times.

Perhaps, if I may, a final thought which I will also be sharing with colleagues later today.

Yours faithfully,

Ali Brown

Ali Brown

Headteacher

Going outdoors is not cancelled,
 Listening to music is not cancelled;
 Quality time with family is not cancelled;
 Reading a book is not cancelled;
 Sharing with friends at a distance is not cancelled;
 Singing out aloud is not cancelled;
 Laughing is not cancelled;
 Sharing HOPE with others is not cancelled;
 Lets us EMBRACE what we have!

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