



Monday 11th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the Prime Minister's address to the nation yesterday there will be many unanswered questions from both staff and parents. At this stage we cannot answer all of your questions but we expect to receive more detailed information from the government today about what yesterday's announcement means in full. We will keep you fully informed of our plans as they develop throughout the week, please continue to look out for our texts and emails. Please also note that at this time the critical worker list has not changed, so that childcare is only being provided for children currently registered for this provision.

If and when we do re-open there will be significant changes to our previous daily procedures to look out for. However clear details will be provided e.g. entry to the school grounds for parents dropping off is unlikely to be permitted and cash **will not** be accepted for dinner payments. All parents of children in KS2 who are paying for a school dinner **MUST** download the School Gateway payment App on their phone or other device. Please see the following information on how to prepare for the on-line payment system and also for registering for free school meals (FSM).

PLANNING FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

We will all have to get used to a very different way of life after lockdown, and school operations will be no different. Our first consideration must always be the health, safety and welfare of our children, their families and our staff team. Please therefore note that for everyone's protection and to maintain social distancing protocols once lockdown is lifted, parents will not be permitted to visit school/reception unless by pre-arranged appointment - and this will only happen in the most exceptional circumstances. The lockdown home/school communication system of emails and telephone contact has worked well so far, and we envisage that this arrangement will have to continue for some time. **It is important therefore that you keep us updated with your correct contact information.**

Unfortunately, this also means that we will not be able to accept any cash, bank notes or cheques for the payment of school dinners, trips etc. Just like many other schools locally and nationally, we were looking to become a cashless school from September anyway, however the lockdown and social distancing restrictions will mean that this cashless system will be introduced whenever schools re-open. **We therefore ask you to set up a School Gateway account as soon as possible, it is free to download from your App store to mobiles/tablets in preparation for this new cashless system.** When you open the App the registration link is at the bottom of the screen. You will need to register using the email you provided to school and your mobile number. Gateway will send you a 4-digit pin and this is what you will use to log in.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM)

Children in EYFS (F2) all receive a universal free school meal and will continue to do so in Y1. Next academic year packed lunches will only be permitted from Y2 upwards and the following year, for KS2 only. You will still have to complete an application form to ensure your child receives their educational grant if you are entitled to claim for FSM.

Schools nationally are working hard to ensure those families already entitled to Free School Meals are receiving financial support during the lockdown period, mainly through the Edenred voucher system. This system is far from perfect and both school and families have experienced inevitable teething problems following its rapid launch. However, it is delivering vital financial support to families up and down the country whilst schools are closed.

Did you know that Free School Meals can save families approximately £350 year per child? Did you also know that around 300,000 UK children who are entitled to Free School Meals don't actually take advantage of them?

That's the equivalent of £105 million pounds in unclaimed Free School Meals support. Free School Meals are an important benefit for those families who meet the criteria, and we want to ensure that as many eligible families as possible are claiming their Free School Meals entitlement. The application process is quick and easy, and Nottingham City Council's pupil benefits team are currently working hard to process all new applications as quickly as possible, as it is recognised that the lockdown is resulting in job losses and financial hardship for many more families.

School budgets are also enhanced through a 'Pupil Premium' grant and this additional income is driven by the number of students eligible for Free School Meals. As such, by applying and claiming your FSM entitlement, you will be helping The Glapton Academy to receive additional government funding to support your child's learning. It's a win-win!

We appreciate that some parents do not claim Free School Meals as they feel that they can cope without so doing, or their child has a free infant school meal or may prefer a packed lunch. If this is the case but you think you may be eligible FSM, even for what might be a short period of time, can we please encourage you to apply, as by doing so you will be supporting our school to receive this vital additional funding. Parents may also feel that their child could be singled out by other children. I would like to reassure you that this is certainly not the case.

We are encouraging all parents who think they may be eligible for Free School Meals to complete and return the City Council application form, which can be found here:

<https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/education-and-schools/benefits-for-school-aged-children/free-school-meals-and-free-milk/>

Further guidance is available on the Pupil Benefits webpage, and the team can also be contacted by telephone on 0115 915 4084, email: pupil.benefits@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or by post at: Pupil Benefits, Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Nottingham, NG2 3NG. Please consider applying today.

Thank you key workers

Whilst writing, I also wanted to thank you for all of the fantastic paintings and drawings that are now adorning the Green Lane fence, and encourage you to continue adding as many colourful pieces of work as possible to the display. Staff and their families will also be joining in with the display, so let's show everyone that the Glapton community appreciates and supports all keyworkers far and wide!

Yours sincerely,



Mrs. C Hurst BA (Hons) PGCE NPQH NLE
Headteacher