

“Strong Partnerships, Strong Community, Strong Schools”

SECAT House, Delaware Road
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CEO: Mrs Ruth Brock

Dear Parents

Thank you again for continued support during a time that is challenging and uncertain for all of us. Having considered the directions in yesterday’s announcement by the Secretary of State and spoken with staff, we are now able to explain our provision over the next few weeks. We do not yet know the duration of the school ‘closure’ and will seek to keep parents informed as and when the situation changes.

The new guidance from the government is below;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

*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.***

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.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

*Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in education, health and social care and in other key sectors as outlined on the list for key workers. 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.***

So following on from this guidance and how at this time we need to look after each other, I do not want to ask our staff to come into work unnecessarily.

Key Workers has now been clarified as of 12.05am Friday and is detailed in the link above and which you can also access via the schools’ websites and on the appendix attached.

Schools will therefore, be open **only for those who need it following the guidance**, during school hours only. This **will not include any pre- or after-school care because of capacity of our schools.**

Our schools will therefore, operate in this way from the end of Friday. We have been preparing for possible closures across a number of weeks. On Monday, teaching staff will be finalising those preparations and configuring the resources that we will then be using to sustain home-based learning.

Southend East Community Academy Trust is a company registered in England and Wales 7825856.
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Please complete the slip below returning it to the school office asap, to let your school know whether you will be accessing the provision from next week because you cannot make any other provision to keep your child safely at home.

From next week, each school will have a programme of learning and fun activities provided. You will have seen the provision that your schools have already being put in place. Individual schools will be communicating directly with you as to what these resources look like and when they will be updated or supplemented. We are conscious that home computer facilities may be limited and are often shared; so headteachers and our school staff have been trying to ensure there is a good variety of activities, and that not all are screen-based.

Our recommendation is that children undertake these activities sometimes with you. So long as pupils manage to avoid illness, and subject to any quarantine restrictions, we would also encourage everyone in our community to sustain a regular pattern of physical exercise: cycling, walking or running.

The closure is, of course, an excellent opportunity to promote other worthwhile learning beyond just the school tasks that are set. It will be a chance to read books, to practise musical instruments, to learn new skills (in the kitchen, perhaps) or to explore other new aspects of learning, including beginning to investigate more advanced levels of study.

Pupils in Year 11 need to ensure they complete any unfinished GCSE content, revise and practise their subject knowledge and skills, sustain their learning particularly in any subjects that they intend to pursue to A-level, and begin to explore the first steps of AS content knowledge for Year 12.

Year 13, likewise, will want to secure a level of expertise and knowledge across all their A-level subjects and position themselves well for the transition to further study, apprenticeships or employment.

We do not yet know exactly how examination grades will be determined for GCSE, AS or A-level candidates. More guidance will follow on that as it is developing hourly.

And finally, as an important footnote:

Please be kind to school office staff, Headteachers, teachers, LSAs and other support staff. We are having a tough time too. We don't have the answers to some of your questions.

We are doing our best in a situation no one could ever have planned for. We are preparing to cater for your children. We care about them and are doing our best.

Please bear with us while we put things in place. We are prepping for children to work from home and trying to teach and keep them settled and worry free in school at the same time.

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We are tired, emotional and finding our way as we go. We have families, friends and loved ones who we are very worried about too. We need your support as much as you need ours. We will get through this together.

I have no doubt that you will have many questions. I will write to you again at the start of next week further would ask, therefore, that you give us all time to find the answers before you ask the questions!

Kind regards,

Ruth Brock

CEO SECAT

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**IF YOU ARE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE TO PROVIDE SAFE CARE FOR YOUR CHILD AT HOME,
YOU DO NOT NEED TO COMPLETE THE SLIP BELOW.**

Parent's name:.....

Key Worker status if applicable:

Child's name:

‘My child will need to be cared for in school for the immediate future’

Signed:

Date:

N.B. please note that, should safe guarding or health and safety become compromised due to growing numbers of staff not being able to come into work, the above situation may have to change and the school may have to close. This will not be done lightly and we will keep in contact with you about the ever-changing situation.

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