



Dear Parents, Carers, Pippins Staff and Committee Members,

Following the Government's announcement on Wednesday 18 March, all schools – including Early Years settings such as Pippins – **will be closed from the end of the day today until further notice**. This means that, for many of our children, **today will be their last day at Pippins for the foreseeable future**.

This is a time of unprecedented change, with the Government's response, advice and guidelines evolving daily. Working through these circumstances, we hope that you can understand and support the actions that we on the Management Committee are taking in order to help tackle Coronavirus and the significant impact it is having on our community and our country.

The Government has confirmed that for the foreseeable future, **all schools and other childcare settings (like Pippins) are being asked to provide care for the children of key workers**, so that these key professionals can remain at work during this period of need. In the last few hours, the Government has clarified exactly which professions will be considered key workers, and how it envisages schools and other childcare settings will provide this service. We are also being asked to ensure that those children with additional needs (particularly those with Education, Health & Care Plans), or who are more vulnerable, are also provided for.

We now need to gather data on which children are eligible to attend Pippins in the coming days, in order to work out what hours we can offer. **Please fill in this form as soon as possible – by the end of today, Friday 20 March**, if you can:

<https://forms.gle/AEjETs6CdEbXb9s7A>

Naturally, it will take us time to process this data and work out what sessions we can offer, and **there will be a short period when we are closed completely**. We are aware that not every school and childcare setting are providing care – which has implications for our staff with children too! Local authorities are working with local schools to plan provision in each areas. It's a complicated situation which we want to get right. The plan is:

**1. Today:** All parents fill in one form per family:

<https://forms.gle/AEjETs6CdEbXb9s7A>

**2. Today:** Parents of children who are more vulnerable or have additional needs will receive another email with a link to a separate form. Please fill this in today.

**3. Monday 23 March: Pippins is closed until further notice.**

4. We collate information from the forms and on staff availability. We think this will take two to three days.

5. By Friday 27 March at latest: we email all parents to update them.

6. By Friday 27 March at latest: we email all parents of children eligible to attend Pippins, letting you know the hours available for your child.

**7. Week beginning Monday 30 March: we send out some ideas for home learning.**

You are welcome to continue using Tapestry to let us know what you've been up to! We will soon (hopefully from Monday 30 March onwards) provide regular ideas and activities online, as a way for children and parents to have access to a 'virtual Pippins' at home and keep in touch with our staff. We appreciate that this will likely be a challenging time for your family and we hope to be able to support you through it to the best of our abilities. One great resource, Twinkl, has put together a home learning pack for use during the Coronavirus schools closure period, which is freely available at <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/covid19-school-closures>. They also have their usual great resources for preschool children in the EYFS section on their website.

We would like to thank all staff, parents and committee members for their support, understanding and flexibility over the last few days, and in the coming weeks and months, as we adapt our provision at this unusual and uncertain time. We will keep in contact with you as we navigate this period together. Please look after yourselves and your families.

Yours faithfully,

Sara Wallace & Marie Hull