



19 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you following the news last night of school closures. This news came to us at the same time it came to you so we are trying to process it and understand fully what it means. I will of course keep you as up to date as I possibly can. At the moment there are more questions than answers but we will work together to make the absolute best of this situation.

You will have heard the news that all schools will close from the end of tomorrow, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Our online learning is up on Go for Schools from this morning and those who are at home can access it. For children in school we are going through modelling with them how to do this and to keep learning at this challenging time. If you have any problems with accessing please contact Mr Course on [DCourse@castlemanor.org.uk](mailto:DCourse@castlemanor.org.uk) and he will support. Please also make sure that children are checking their emails regularly. For support with this please contact [IMessal@castlemanor.org.uk](mailto:IMessal@castlemanor.org.uk)

Routine and emotional wellbeing are really important. Please keep your child in the school routine during the week so that they are structured and this will help them and hopefully you!

Unless school staff are unwell, they will be continuing during term time to work and support their pupils, this includes any who are isolated who are working hard from home and will answer emails.

We have been delivering vouchers and sanitary products for children who are entitled to free school meals, and will update you as the national provision for this develops - The Department for Education has said that there will shortly be a national voucher scheme.

We are so sad for those students in Year 11 who were approaching their exams this summer as these will not take place. They have worked incredibly hard and deserve this recognition. Today and tomorrow we have continued the Catering practicals and I am so impressed with what children have been producing. We know that many students are extremely upset by this news and need support at this time. I will be talking to Year 11 today in assembly. We will be fully cooperating with the exam boards to ensure they receive the exam grades they deserve and are able to go on successfully to the next stage of their education and life. The Year 10 Business exam will go ahead tomorrow as planned, with arrangements made for anyone who misses it due to illness or isolation.

Unity Schools Partnership is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 07400386. The registered office is at Unity SP Offices, Park Road, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7YD.

Headteacher: Mrs. Vanessa Whitcombe



Castle Manor Academy  
Eastern Avenue  
Haverhill  
Suffolk CB9 9JE

Tel: 01440 705501  
Fax: 01440 714050  
Email: [info@castlemanor.org.uk](mailto:info@castlemanor.org.uk)  
Website: [www.castlemanor.org.uk](http://www.castlemanor.org.uk)



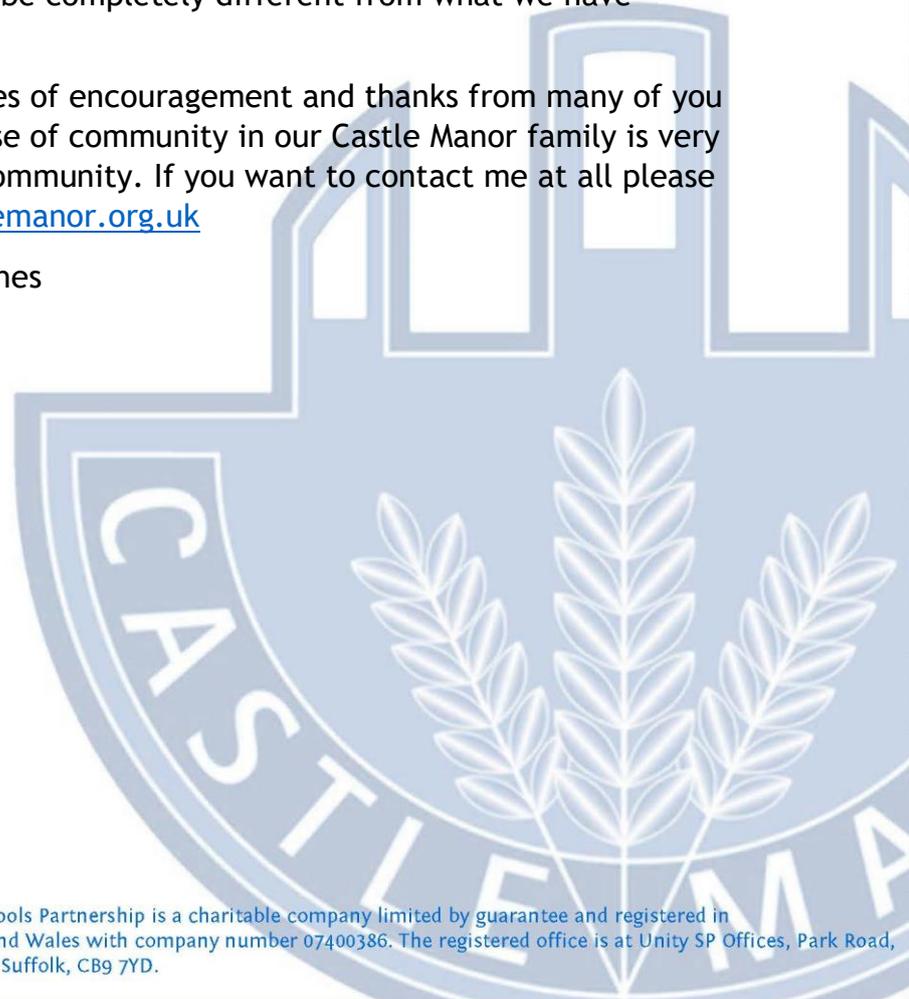
You may have read that there are a small number of children who will continue to attend school - children of key workers and vulnerable children. We currently understand that examples of key workers include NHS staff, police and delivery drivers who need to be able to go to work, but have been told that we will receive further guidance about the term 'key worker'. I will write to you as soon as this is clearer. Vulnerable children are so far defined as those who have a social worker and those with Education, Health and Care Plans. We have been asked to keep schools open for these children throughout the Easter holidays. We are not yet clear what this will involve and will again let parents know if their child appears eligible for such provision.

We know that many children, families and indeed us at school are anxious about this news at the moment and we do our best through school routines to support them. We are determined to find ways with you to support the children even though our routines are going to be completely different from what we have known.

We have received lovely messages of encouragement and thanks from many of you and from your children. The sense of community in our Castle Manor family is very strong, as it is right across our community. If you want to contact me at all please email me on [VWhitcombe@castlemanor.org.uk](mailto:VWhitcombe@castlemanor.org.uk)

Sending you all my very best wishes

Vanessa Whitcombe  
Headteacher



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