



## BREXIT January 2021- Advice for parents at Great Chart Primary School

### **General Brexit information**

#### **Q. There may be a period of disruption? How likely is this?**

A. It is difficult to determine in advance but nearer the time, the likelihood and level of any disruption will become clearer.

*We will adopt our Severe Weather procedures*

#### **Q. What are the possible impacts on the Country?**

A. Currently the UK membership of the European Union allows for free movement of people, goods and services between mainland Europe and the UK. Leaving the EU will remove these arrangements and could cause disruption.

UK ports will be required to implement more robust customs inspections and import/export checks, so there would likely be delays which could create congestion challenges and possibly, shortages of consumables and increased difficulty in accessing services.

#### **Q. What are the possible impacts on Kent?**

A. Port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel terminal at Folkestone are two of the country's primary access and egress points for people and goods. If there are delays, then freight traffic may be placed in a holding pattern. This plan would see parts of the Kent motorway network being used as contraflow and holding areas to manage freight traffic build up. The impact of this is threefold.

1. there is the potential to make movement around the county by road much more challenging, even impossible.
2. there might be shortages of food, fuel or services, due to the ability of providers to deliver them.
3. the impact of both the above on the ability of students/pupils, staff and contractors to attend school.

#### **Q. Are there any other issues that could exacerbate the challenges at the terminals?**

A. In the past, there has been disruption at the Channel ports due to protests and blockades from fishing vessels, port staff, farmers and ship crews. There is also a long running protest about a variety of issues that has seen motorway and major road blockages that impact on the free movement of freight in the area.

Although there is no knowledge of such protests being planned after the UK leaves the EU, it is sensible to factor in the possibility.

There is a possibility that passenger traffic may also be affected if there are changes to the way in which tourists cross the channel, including an increase in the time it takes to conduct passport checks.

# Specifics for Great Chart Primary School

**Q. If there aren't sufficient staff to provide a full education to all the pupils/students, what will Mrs Pang do?**

A. It is important to be aware of the impact on the community. For example, if a 2FE primary school closes, it might potentially result in several hundred working parents having to leave their place of work to look after their child. These parents may be in an occupation that provides a vital service to the community (e.g. nurses, carers, bus & lorry drivers, social workers, or even teachers themselves). This exacerbates the challenge to the community.

During periods of staff shortage due to an emergency, Mrs Pang will consider two alternative courses of action and adopt the **Severe Weather procedures**.

First consider suspending normal teaching and instead adopt a 'carer' role, with classes being supervised. The decision on safety is made by Mrs Pang through a risk assessment and formal decision.

Secondly, consider closure of separate year groups. To use a primary school example, if there are no Year two teachers but a full team of every other year, Mrs Pang will consider just closing the Year 2 class or arrange for the Year 2 class to work with the Year 1s. Remote learning will be provided.

Parents will be kept informed via emails, texts, Facebook, website and Kent Closures: <https://www.kentclosures.co.uk/>

**Q. What are the staff : pupil/student safety ratios?**

A. With the exception of 'rising fives' in Year R, there are no staff : pupil safety ratios. Pupils under the age of five may not be in a teaching or care scenario with more than 30 children per qualified teacher.

**Q. Under what circumstances will Mrs Pang consider school closure?**

A. Following a risk assessment, Mrs Pang will determine that not only is normal schooling not possible, moving to a carer role is not possible either.

**Q. What should I do if I've been caught in traffic and am unable to collect my child?**

A. You will need to keep the school informed so that we can keep your child safely at school.

Parents need to ensure emergency childcare arrangements are in place in case they are unable to collect their child. These need to be communicated to the office.

**Q. How will we manage student/pupil absences?**

A. In the same way that we manage student/pupil absence in any other emergency. See: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/739764/Guidance\\_on\\_school\\_attendance\\_Sept\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739764/Guidance_on_school_attendance_Sept_2018.pdf) for more information, but the likelihood is that absent students will be marked down as Code Y. From the guide:

***Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances***

*This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:*

- *The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or*
- *The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or*
- *A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.*

**Q. What school services might be affected?**

A. This is difficult to say for certain, although it may help to consider direct and indirect effect.

A direct consequence of disruption at the ports and tunnel terminal could cause congestion that might make it difficult for food, fuel and other supplies to be delivered to the schools in a timely manner.

An indirect consequence of disruption could see a reduced availability of food, fuel and other supplies, because the amount coming into the country isn't enough to match demand.

**Q. What do we do if our food suppliers are not going to be able to get to the school today? We only keep enough food for one more day.**

A. We are working with our catering supplier to ensure they have contingency plans in place. However, if in an emergency, we may ask parents to provide a healthy packed lunch for their child.

**Q. Our school is near a motorway. Will we see traffic build up near us?**

A. KCC Highways, Kent Police and the Highways Agency have undertaken extensive planning to mitigate the disruption caused by delays at the channel terminals. Several plans are in place that can implement contraflows, fixed parking areas, tourist traffic management and other measures. The plans are dynamic and can be escalated or downgraded depending on how much traffic is trying to get to/from the channel terminals.

If implemented, the plans might see freight traffic parked on motorways, similar to that seen during Operation Stack. The motorways would be affected, initially the M20, where local traffic will have access via contraflow. Later phases include using the M26.

**Q. Our school is near a main route to the terminals, or a road that could be used by freight trying to get around the traffic management plan. What can we expect?**

A. The main two concerns are the increased risk of accident as bikes, cars and trucks take risks that they might not normally take, and the possibility of reduced air quality due to stationary traffic.

Schools should advise staff, parents and students/pupils to take additional care when trying to cross roads. Parked vehicles reduce visibility so crossing between vehicles should be avoided. Use Zebra, Puffin and Pelican crossings wherever possible.

Many freight vehicles will tend to keep their engines running, even when stationary for long periods. For many trucks this is unnecessary, but refrigeration units do need to keep their engine running.

The District Councils monitor air quality, (see [www.Kentair.org.uk](http://www.Kentair.org.uk)) for an immediate picture of the air quality in your area. If you notice that the air quality is deteriorating, then it is probably best to move all staff and students inside the school. Once inside the school building, substance exposure is reduced by about 90%. To reduce the risk of exposure even lower, check all windows, doors and trickle vents are closed and turn off mechanical ventilation or air conditioning to reduce air circulation.

**Q. Our school is near to an area where lorries are parking. What additional measures should I consider?**

A. Whilst arrangements will be communicated to support lorry drivers in complying with the traffic management plans, it is quite likely that lorries will find many other unofficial places to park, particularly at night time. Many of these parked lorries could be in completely unsuitable places.

Monitoring parked lorries is the responsibility of the Police or Highways departments, depending on the location.

