

Ref: ABI/CLO

20 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

COVID-19 School Closure Update

Please can I begin by thanking you all for the positive messages and offers of support we have received – at testing times such as these it is heartening to see us all coming together (not literally!) as a community.

I am writing to update you on what has changed overnight.

As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. And 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.

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors is outlined below. **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.**

Please, therefore, follow these **5 key principles**:

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**
- 2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.**
- 3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.**
- 4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.**
- 5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.**

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and you **cannot keep your child safe at home** then your children will be prioritised for education provision:

Health and social care

This includes (but is not limited to); doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers and other frontline health and social care staff including; volunteers, the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector, those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical/personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

This includes; nursery and teaching staff, teaching assistants, support staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes; those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services. Those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting are to be included.

Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arm's length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and financial services

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.



If workers think they fall within the critical categories above they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

Please take the time to complete an online survey which will allow the school to best plan for the provision next week – the survey can be found here: <https://bit.ly/391qqJe> alternatively please complete the form at the end of this letter and ensure that this is delivered to the school.

I am aware that we requested this information last night and you may have already responded. However, in light of the updated guidance, I would appreciate it if you would re-evaluate your responses and let us know if there are changes from your previous response.

Once we have numbers of pupils who need **Continued School Attendance**, we can then put plans in place to start this from **Monday 23rd March**.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT SCHOOLS ARE CLOSING TO SOCIALLY DISTANCE PUPILS AND STAFF. If you can make arrangements to socially distance your children (not with people in vulnerable groups), then this should be your priority and preferred option - it will be safer for your child(ren), your family and school staff.

Thank you once again for your understanding as we negotiate this uncharted territory, and for the ever increasing messages of support.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Bissoo', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mr A Bissoo
Principal



I am a Key Worker in the following Sector (Please tick as appropriate):	Tick √
Health and social care	
Teachers and support school	
Education and childcare	
Key public services	
Local and national government	
Food and other necessary goods	
Public safety and national security	
Transport	
Utilities, communication and financial services	
I am in Full time/ Part time employment:	
Which days do you work?	
Do you have a young or vulnerable children/young people at home you are a carer for? Y/N	
If yes are you able to make alternative arrangements which do not involve asking Grandparents or other vulnerable people to support? Y/N	

