

Dear Parents/Carers of children accessing care provision at school 23.03.20

Further to arrangements being made for care provision on Friday, the DfE have issued further information to Headteachers over the weekend. I have copied the core information for you as it strongly encourages you to only send your child to school if absolutely necessary-ie if it is not safe for them to be at home. Examples include a single parent who is a key worker; where both parents are key workers and there is no other care available within the wider family; vulnerable children or children with EHCPs in unsafe homes.

As critical workers ourselves, we are absolutely committed to supporting critical workers. This communication is only for parents who **can** make alternative arrangements, by considering afresh whether their child should be at school. This is to help with minimising risk of the virus spreading to those with no alternative. **If you can't look after your child due to your critical work, continue to send them to school-you have our full support.** If we are not sure that your job is on the critical workers list, we will ask for proof in line with DfE directive.

The rules still apply regarding self-isolation where your child shows symptoms or someone in the household does.

DfE 22.03.20

We have asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

It is important to underline that schools, all childcare settings (including early years settings, childminders and providers of childcare for school-age children), 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, and all childcare providers, 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.

The first aim of the partial school closure measures set out by the Secretary of State for Education is to reduce the overall population of children moving around local areas as far as possible, in order to further reduce the number of social interactions and thus flatten the upward curve of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Children with a parent or carer who is listed on the [government's critical worker list](#) should be considered for a school place, so long as their job cannot be done from home.

Many parents working in these sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

We will monitor closely the experience of schools in identifying critical workers and their capacity to respond to the needs of critical workers. Government is working with representatives of school leaders to ensure they have the clarity they need in identifying critical workers. We will publish updates to this guidance should it prove necessary to provide further points of clarification over the identification of critical workers.

Those with an EHC plan should be risk-assessed by their school/college in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school/college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Many families with parents working in critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

In summary, if you can make alternative arrangements, you are urged to do so to protect those who can't. If you can't look after your child due to your critical work, continue to send them to school-you have our full support. Mrs Davis