

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Update Following Announcement Regarding School Closures

I am writing following my letter yesterday confirming the Government's decision to close schools at the end of today. At the point this announcement was made on Wednesday evening, Government confirmed that schools would continue to offer provision for children considered to be vulnerable, and for children of key workers. Since this announcement, we have been waiting for additional guidance from Government about who is included in each category. This information was eventually published in the early hours of Friday morning.

Attached to this letter is the list of "key workers", published by the Government in their guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>).

The guidance is explicit that **all children who can stay safely at home throughout the school closure period should do so** in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Schools have been instructed to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend, and we remain committed to this.

Our Schools will contact parents of students considered to be vulnerable to discuss the provision offered to them. If you believe your child fits into this category and you have not been contacted before lunchtime, please contact the School this afternoon to speak with a member of staff.

Each School will also be asking parents to confirm directly if you are a key worker and need the School to continue to provide childcare to your child. Guidance to key workers is as follows:

1. If it is at all possible for a child to remain at home, then they should. As a result, it is expected that where a household includes an adult who is not a key worker, this individual will provide childcare support.
2. Childcare should not be provided by those over-70 or with an underlying health condition given the increased risk for these individuals.
3. 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.

I appreciate that the closure of our Schools to all students who are safe to remain at home will be upsetting for our students, and will create difficulties for parents and carers. However, we are determined to support the national effort to combat this disease in any way we can, and it is therefore unfortunately that we must implement the measures as instructed by Government.

Please be assured that, as I explained in more detail yesterday, we will continue to keep in close contact with you and your children throughout the closure period, and we will provide any support we can during this difficult time.

I thank you again for your support.

With all best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DLC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Clayton  
Chief Executive

## Key Workers

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 and personal protective equipment.

### **Education and childcare**

This includes nursery and teaching 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.

### **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 arms 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.