



Provision for Key Workers at The Good Shepherd P.S.

We firmly believe that in this very challenging time of great concern for all in our school community we should continue to promote the guidance from the experts and that is to stay at home and avoid person to person contact at all costs. We do however appreciate that some people still need to attend work to provide vital services and in a spirit of support and solidarity we will be in a position from Tuesday of this week (24th March) to begin a limited childcare service. The children have all received their Home Learning packs which provide the main educational focus of their work. Due to significant reductions on our staffing levels we must insist that if you are considering sending your child to school during this time that the relevant advice from the Department for Education is strictly followed. Please read the guidance below:

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 Executive 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.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide supervised education 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.

Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors 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 key principles:

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.*
- 2. If a child 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.*

To give some guidance the following outlines the broad categories of what would be defined as a key worker;

- **Health and Social Care.** This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector
- **Education and childcare.** This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response
- **Public safety and national security.** This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles
- **Transport.** This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response
- **Utilities and Communication.** This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies, to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, services and waste disposal
- **Food and other necessary goods.** This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical etc.)
- **Other workers essential to delivering key public services**
- **Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response**

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.

The aim is to keep the number of pupils coming into schools to a minimum.

This service will be offered from 9 am to 3 pm daily and must be agreed and prearranged in advance so that adequate staffing levels can be put in place. If you have carefully considered the above advice and you still feel that the only option is the childcare provision at the school please contact Mr. O'Neill by email doneill514@c2kni.net or on the school phone 028 90301000 and leave a voicemail if prompted. School meals will also be available.

Confirmation of your child's place and dinner requirements must be agreed at least one day in advance.