

Dear Parents/Carers,

## **Re: Coronavirus update – school closure to most pupils**

Following on from my letter yesterday, I'm now writing to let you know that we have clearer guidance on who is considered to be a **'Key Worker.'**

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 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 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.**

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with [education, health and care \(EHC\) plans](#).

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 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 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.

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 be aware that every additional child in school and contact with their parents will increase the risk for themselves and of course the staff at the Willows.

If you believe your **work is critical to the Covid-19 response** and you haven't informed the school please email the school office as soon as possible at [willows.admin@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:willows.admin@trafford.gov.uk) with your:

- name
- occupation, work role (with reference to the categories above) and work contact details
- **confirmation that you have no other child care available to you**
- child/children's names
- days of the week you will require child care
- times of day you will require child care (**we cannot guarantee to accommodate all times requested**)

We'll be in touch as soon as we can giving further details and offering child care places at the Willows where applicable. If your child usually receives free school meals we will also be in touch with more information about how we will continue to provide this

**All other children will need to stay at home, so we ask that you do not send your child into school from Monday onwards.**

Please note that this is a national closure – as you may have heard in the news – so while it is a challenging situation, we are not alone. We'll re-open fully as soon as we can and will let you know when this is by emailing parents and posting on the school website [www.willowstimperley.co.uk](http://www.willowstimperley.co.uk) the school Twitter feed and the PTA Facebook page

### **What we'll continue doing while your child is at home**

Your child's learning is of course important to us, so we'll continue to help your child to learn.

We will be sending out information about how your child can access home learning activities and ideas today, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.,

This is as much as we know right now and we appreciate your continued patience with us as we deal with this ever-changing situation. We understand that this latest news will have an impact on you and your family and it's far from ideal, but we'll continue to keep in touch with any updates as the situation develops.

If you want to get in touch to share any concerns, please don't hesitate to do so via the school office at [willows.admin@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:willows.admin@trafford.gov.uk)

And remember: if you or your child feels ill and you want to know what to do next, please use [NHS 111 online](https://www.nhs.uk).

Thank you again for your continued support, and we will be in touch with more information when we can.

Kind regards,

Mrs Warren