

## **Urgent Letter to parents – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (Replaces all Previous Guidance)**

Dear Parents/Carers,

This letter is informing you of changes made to the Government definition of 'Key Worker' as published on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Please contact the School Office (01945 583799 or [office@orchards.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@orchards.cambs.sch.uk)) if you feel your child should be in school on Monday. Guidance applies if one parent and/or partner living in the household is a key worker. This could apply to your children. If it does not, school will be closed for your children from Monday.

**It is important to note that, if it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**

As I am sure you are aware, on Wednesday the Government announced that all schools will be closed from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> of March until further notice. This means that for the majority of our children, Friday will be their last day in school for what could be a considerable period of time.

I hope you can understand and support the actions we are taking as a school, to play our part in helping our community tackle Coronavirus and the significant impact it is having upon us all.

The Government has confirmed that for the foreseeable future, all schools have been asked to provide care for children with Education Health Care Plans, Children who have a contact Social Worker, e.g., 'Children in Need' or those on the Child Protection Register and any Children in Care (LAC). **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.

In order to enable key workers to remain at work during this period of need, their children may be catered for in schools. Key Workers include:

### **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.

**If children do not fall into one of the categories above they will not be in school.** We know this will be a difficult period for everyone, and we want to offer our support. Our teachers have put together education packs, resources and activities for pupils to complete, and we will also provide a wide range of sources for information and learning that can be accessed electronically.

The Education Secretary has confirmed that they will not go ahead with primary school assessments but we await further guidance about alternative assessment methods. 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, with support from a scheme that the government has just announced.

This is as much as we know right now and we appreciate your continued patience 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.

I would like to thank you for your continued support and understanding during this period.

Kindest Regards

Clare Claxton - Headteacher