

20.3.20

Dear Parents and Carers

Good morning. Please find further details below related to the forthcoming school closures.

School closure - exceptions

School will be open for children deemed 'vulnerable' – please see excerpt below for details. School staff will be calling the parents of these children directly today to ask whether or not families wish to take up this offer for their children.

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.

Key workers list

Please see the information below, taken from the Government guidelines for schools. I have highlighted parts in red, not because we don't want children in school (we do) but because I feel it's our social duty to do what the Government is asking us to in these unprecedented circumstances.

...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 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, 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.**

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.

Actions to be taken by you:

To allow us to plan staffing for Monday, we need to establish very quickly which parents are key workers who have no other option but to send their children to school. In a two parent/carer family, where one parent is not a key worker, we ask that children do not attend school to limit the numbers we have in school. This is to support the Government's aim to reduce larger gatherings by social distancing.

If you have read this information and need your child to attend school because there is no other alternative, please email us on this new address by 2pm if possible – closure@djs.eriding.net

Please include the following information:

- Your child's name and class
- What your job is/jobs are (please specify if you are a single parent)
- Whether you need your child to attend full time or on specific days if you work part time
- If you are likely to need breakfast club/Kidszone after school provision
- Will your child be staying for hot meals (the menus may need to vary depending on what foods are available)?

Please note that, whilst the Government suggest that children aren't looked after by grandparents, I believe the advice is related to people over 70 and also those with underlying health conditions. We can't assume that all grandparents are over 70!!!

As soon as we possibly can (today), we will contact you to confirm your child's attendance at school next week. If we have any queries we will get in touch, especially if we need to clarify anything related to your job falling into one of the key worker categories.

We fully understand the worry and frustration that all of this is causing to you as parents and carers and very much wish we could wake up to discover it has all been a bad dream, but the reality is here and so at Driffield Junior School we will follow the Government guidelines wherever possible to support the greater cause and will provide the best care we can for those children who need to be in school to allow their families to carry out essential roles that will help keep our country going.

Please note that information regarding Easter holiday provision for the relevant children will be sent out next week once we have had time to plan ahead.

Thank you once again for your understanding and I wish you all good health in the coming weeks.

L J Laird

Headteacher