

19.3.2020

Dear Parents and Carers



KEY WORKERS – UPDATE 6

Late last night, the government released information about the key workers for whom the school will stay open.

Whilst the school is here to support both you as parents of frontline services and your children, we need to make sure that we are acting appropriately in this time.

I want to refer you to a section of the government guidance that appears **before** the key worker list.

As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. That is why the government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing. And 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 also goes on to say, under the key principles of the guidance, before any mention of key workers: **If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.**

The exact criteria are as follows:

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 arm's 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.”

I am sure you can see that the list includes a large number of people. There is further guidance that also says:

Children with at least one parent or carer who are identified as critical workers by the government can send their children to school if required.

Depending on the number of applications, we may, or may not, be able to accommodate this.

If you believe you are a Key Worker, please complete the form that was sent home yesterday and return to the school by Midday today. We shall endeavour to collate all of your responses as quickly as possible and then email you if we can accommodate your children. Please bear in mind this may be over the weekend.

I do appreciate that for some parents you are not necessarily aware if you are required to work at this time. If at a later stage your circumstances change, please complete the form and return it to the school. You may use the red post box in the front entrance, or scan and email the form to office@west-borough.kent.sch.uk

At West Borough, we are a community, and we will pull together to support the effort to keep our society safe. Therefore, we will remain open for the children who need it, but I strongly urge you to think very carefully of whether this is necessary for you. I also need to make sure that my staff are well protected as key workers themselves, all of whom have families and many of whom have children of their own.

I know that this time causes much anxiety, and as a result, we can all be a little more on edge. We all need to take care to choose our words carefully. I know that we will all do our best to support each other through this time and I thank you for your ongoing support for me, my team and the school.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Crittenden
Headteacher