

MULLAGLASS PRIMARY SCHOOL

*8 Goragh Road
Newry
Co. Down
BT35 6PZ*

Tel. No. 028 30830 229

Saturday 21st March 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian

Supporting Children of Key Workers

Following the statement made by the Minister for Education, Peter Weir, outlining how schools will support those families with parents who are **key workers**, please see the latest guidance below on who this applies to and what format it may take.

"Key worker parents requiring care provision:

Many parents working in the identified key workers list **may** be able to ensure that their child is kept at home.

EVERY CHILD WHO CAN BE SAFELY CARED FOR AT HOME SHOULD BE.

There is no requirement for identified key worker parents to take up this offer or send their children to school if they do not wish to.

Any children previously withdrawn from school on the basis of risk should not return.

Priority will be given to children with BOTH parents working as Key Workers and only when both parents are working AT THE SAME TIME should their children attend school.

In single parent families, the main carer **MUST** be a Key Worker and be required at work.

Every alternative childcare arrangement should be explored before deciding to send children to school. School should, in effect, be a **LAST RESORT**. This is in order to comply with general **public health advice on social distancing**.

Wrap around services will not be available and schools will **only** be open for normal school hours.

Children who refuse to attend school must not be forced to do so. Schools cannot be expected to accept responsibility for those children that present a flight risk.

There will be no nurse or medical support available in schools.

Provision of any level of service will be dependent on staff availability and the school may have to be closed if this becomes a problem.

If you are a key worker and believe that you may need to avail of this reduced provision and believe you are eligible, please contact the school immediately."

Schools are being asked to continue to provide supervision for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable.

The term vulnerable encompasses those children who are in need of protection, or in need, as defined by the Children (NI) Order 1995. Children and young people in need may include those:

- Receiving support from Health & Social Services including family support, child protection and looked after children services
- On the Child Protection Register
- With statements of special education needs
- Accessing EOTAS
- Accessing Education Nurture Units
- With emerging and diagnosed mental health needs
- Who are homeless
- Who are young carers
- Subject to paramilitary threat
- Whose parents have mental health problems
- Whose parents have alcohol and drug addictions
- Affected by domestic violence

Obviously it goes without saying, if it is necessary to use this service we will look after your children in order to support you in your important role. At the time of writing this letter, I have received no further guidance on school meals.

It is worth bearing in mind that we have been instructed to close to minimise the risk of infection at a time of national and global crisis. It is essential, therefore, that we are still able to comply with Public Health guidance.

With this in mind, I ask that you contact the school either by phone (02830 830229) or by email pgreenaway945@c2kni.net **between 11am - 3pm tomorrow** to inform us if your child will be attending to make essential preparation.

*Please note

- If your child is attending, he/she must be wearing full school uniform.
- The teachers / classroom assistants on duty in school will supervise children. Children will work on with their home learning work.
- Normal school hours apply (9am-2pm/3pm)

Please consider the key questions at the end of this letter.

Best wishes to all you and your families. We are thinking about all our school community at this time. Please stay safe, stay healthy and we will see you soon.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Greenaway
Principal

Questions for Key Worker Parents:

Have you read carefully all of the information above?

Are you a key worker?

What category of key worker?

Have you already withdrawn your child for H&S reasons?

Is your family socially isolating?

Is any member of your family exhibiting any symptoms of cough or temperature?

Does your child have underlying health issues?

Do you have family members at home with underlying health issues?

Are you clear that children exhibiting symptoms must be picked up immediately?

Are you clear that that Children will be socially distanced in school?