

# Ballyclare Nursery School

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**Principal:** Emma Corry, BA Ed Hons, NPQH



Dear Parents

Yesterday evening the Minister for Education in Northern Ireland, Peter Weir MLA, made a statement outlining that all schools will close on Friday 20th March.

Schools have been requested to continue to facilitate provision for children of identified key workers. However, the statement left school principals with numerous questions and we have sought urgent clarification. As a result, schools need time to plan for this provision and therefore Ballyclare Nursery School will be closed to all pupils on Monday.

While we wish to support you and your families at this difficult time, we need to ensure that we do not increase the risk of infection for either your children or our staff.

It is vitally important that schools have an indication of how many children meet the criteria outlined below. Parents should contact school by 11am on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March morning outlining how they meet the criteria, if they wish to be considered for the offer of a place. **This can only be done by emailing the school.**

Before contacting school – Points to Consider:

- A list of key workers, issued by the Department of Education is listed at the end of this letter. **Only children with BOTH parents working as key workers, and both parents out at work at the same time should consider attending school, in single parent families, the individual parent MUST be a key worker.**
- If possible, alternative childcare arrangements should be sought before deciding to send your child to school. For example, with other family member, friends etc. Please try and use schools as a last resort. This is to try and limit the number of children and adults together in a small space in line with recent social distancing guidance.
- Only a school's normal opening and closing session times will apply. Eg Your child's usual attendance pattern of either AM or PM sessions.
- Please be advised that we will not be able to offer our usual full curriculum and that schools will be performing **childcare duties, rather than teaching**
- Opening is dependent on the school having adequate staff to do so safely.

Once key information has been gathered and decisions made, only families with an offer of a place should attend the school. It could potentially be impossible to accept the number of families who may apply for provision, given the extensive nature of the Minister's keyworker list. Schools will be in contact with parents requesting places early next week.

Yours sincerely

Emma Corry

Principal

LIST OF KEY WORKERS AS OUTLINED ON DOCUMENTATION ISSUED TO SCHOOLS ON 19TH MARCH 2020

**Please work with us to ensure that schools operate with a limited number of children and staff**

In priority order:

- Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector
- Education and childcare. This includes nursery and teaching staff, non-teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response
- Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles
- Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response
- Utilities and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies, to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, services and waste disposal
- Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (eg hygiene, medical etc)
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.