

Ref: Supporting Children of Key Workers in Primary School

Dear Parents/Carers,

Greenhaw Primary and Nursery School will close today Friday 20th March 2020. It will remain closed to all children and staff (except the school Leadership Team) on Monday 23rd March 2020, as we prepare for the possibility of incoming Key Worker children. As you will appreciate, this process of selection and preparation for this unprecedented arrangement will require time and staffing. It is important to note **this is not a statutory requirement – schools are being asked to help as part of a national response.**

The recent medical advice on how to reduce the risk of and 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. Children **must** be looked after at **home** where this is **at all possible**. Our school facility is a **service of last resort**. This is to protect our children and to ensure that the maximum possible number of Key Workers are able to go to work to provide all of us with the essential services that we need.

Many principals from the Derry/Londonderry Principals' Association have agreed to follow a coordinated response to ensure that we support the children of key workers in a similar way across our schools. We wish to express our gratitude to all of the essential key workers and commend you on the fantastic job that you are doing, your commitment and dedication is very much appreciated. Some schools may be in a position to provide more support, depending on the numbers of staff still available to work.

It is vitally important that schools are aware how many children of key workers will be attending school on the agreed date. Schools will have a limited capacity due to social distancing regulations and a reduced workforce.

With this in mind, before you apply for a school place for your child (ren) please consider:

- 1) Your work role, days and hours of supervision required
- 2) Do you have a partner, another family member or safe and trusted friend who can look after your child?
- 3) Your partner or family member is working from home and is therefore considered to be able to provide childcare.

If you can make any alternative arrangements, we would ask that you consider doing so. 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 children with both parents working as key workers and both parents out at work at the same time should consider attending school. In single families, the individual parent must be the Key Worker.

Please refer to the list below of specific job titles within each sector to check if you are:

- **A single parent identified as a key worker**
- **Both parents identified as key workers**
- **If both parents are key workers, consider your roles, days and hours of work pattern. One parent might be at home during school hours on various days.**

List of Key Workers:

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, 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 (e.g hygiene, medical etc).
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services.
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

Please contact the school by email before 1p.m. on Sunday 22nd March 2020 to request a place for your child/ren on info@greenhaw.londonderry.ni.sch.uk This email must contain your job title, information that is relevant to the request and a contact number for work and home. **We all have a duty to each other to use this facility responsibly.** If the demand for places at school exceeds the available capacity, we may require parents to provide an official letter from their employer confirming their Key Worker status. In addition, where capacity is becoming exhausted, we may have no option but to require confirmed Key Workers to sign a daily declaration that they have no one at home on that day to look after their children.

Please note that this is only a request you should not bring your child to school until notified by the school that there is a place available. **Only families with an offer of a place should attend the school and they should only do this when directed to by the school.**

Please bear in mind schools can only offer places based on their capacity and have to take into careful consideration the safety and wellbeing of all the staff and pupils.

Schools will not be able to operate a 'normal' school day. Many of our schools are already operating with a significant reduction in staffing and this will probably continue to get worse over time.

Please be advised that schools will be performing childcare duties, rather than teaching, as provisions have already been put in place for online / remote teaching and learning. It may not be your child's year group teacher working on a particular day. We would ask that you pay attention to the above points before applying for a place for your child/ren.

Yours sincerely,

Principals

(Derry/Londonderry Principals' Association)