



23rd March 2020

Coronavirus – Covid-19
KEYWORKER INFORMATION URGENT – ACTION REQUIRED

Dear Parents and Carers

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. At present Riverwalk School is closed but working closely with the Local Authority to reopen when it is safe to do so. Schools are being asked to provide care for a limited number of children – children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

In guidance published the Cabinet Office and Department to Education published a list of roles that are considered to be those of 'key workers'. These are listed below, as published. The government has also clarified that vulnerable children include those 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 plans. It clearly states that many children with and EHC plan can be safely cared for at home.

According to the guidance, those in roles listed below will have their children prioritised for education provision if they cannot be kept at home. Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. **And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.**

Parents have been asked to follow these key principles:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them. This provision is based upon a risk assessment carried out by the school and family.
3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.



It has also been confirmed, in separate guidance that children will be eligible to attend school even if just one parent or carer is identified as a “critical worker”.

‘Key workers’

Health and social care

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**

IMPORTANT NEXT STEPS:

If you feel that your occupation falls within any of the above categories and you are unable to find care for your child at home then please contact school via email at comms@riverwalk.suffolk.sch.uk as a matter of urgency and by Wednesday 25th March 2020 12pm noon at the latest, so that I can draw up contingency plans for after Easter holidays.

I will need to know the following information:

- what your occupation is specifically and how it fulfils the criteria as set out above
- what days you will be required to work – childcare support in school is only in place for the days and times that you are working

or

- As a child identified within the vulnerable group why your child cannot be safely cared for at home, as part of our risk assessment process.

If you have any questions or queries then please do get in touch at comms@riverwalk.suffolk.sch.uk.

I know that many of you have been waiting for this guidance and that the wait has caused a lot of uncertainty and worry but now that this information is available we can start to put plans in place. Once I have the information above I will start to draw up plans and I will be back in touch as soon as possible to confirm arrangements.

Yours sincerely



Jan Hatchell
Headteacher

