**Ref: Supporting Children of Key Workers in Primary School**

Dear Parents / Carers,

The Minister for Education in Northern Ireland, Peter Weir MLA, made a statement outlining how schools will close from the end of the school day on Friday 20th March, however, will open with skeleton staff on Monday 23rd March to support identified Key Workers.

In order to respond effectively, the school will need to know the number of key workers’ children who will be attending on Monday morning.  Therefore, if you are an identified key worker we would ask you to make contact with the school by 3.00pm on Friday 20th March to inform us that your child/children will be attending.

**It will be helpful if you would identify for us how you meet the criteria for key worker status as outlined below.**

You should contact us in one of the following ways:

* Telephone the school on 028 44830319 between 9:00am-3:00pm
* Send an email sent to: info@holyfamilyps.downpatrick.ni.sch.uk

As set out in the Minister of Education’s statement, the aim is to keep the number of pupils coming into schools to a minimum so, before contacting the school, please pay particular attention to the points below.

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.

**Points to Consider**

* A list of key workers, issued by the Department of Education is listed below. 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 main carer **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 members, 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.
* Each school’s normal opening and closing time will apply. Eg 9am –2pm, 9am –3pm.

 Initially, schools will not have wraparound services available especially due to reduced staffing, this will be reviewed as thing progress.

* We will seek to continue this service for as long as we can but please be aware that, as with many other schools, we are already operating with significant reductions in staffing and this will probably continue to get worse over time.
* Children attending will be required to wear their school uniform.
* Schools will largely be performing childcare duties, as not all teachers are currently available to teach specific Year Groups and teachers must also be available to provide online/remote learning. For this reason, **we will not be engaging with parents on teaching programmes or curriculum content during this period.**
* There is currently no advice as to school meals provision, so all children should bring a packed lunch.

We ask that you pay attention to the points outlined above before deciding to send your child to school.

**LIST OF KEY WORKERS AS OUTLINED ON DOCUMENTATION ISSUED TO SCHOOLS ON**

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

* **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.)

* **Key national and local government** including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

Yours sincerely,

Mr C Curran

**APPLICATION FOR CHILDCARE SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN OF KEY WORKERS**

**Please phone the school by 3pm 20th March 02844830319**

**or email your response to** **info@holyfamilyps.downpatrick.ni.sch.uk**

**with the following information included**

Children’s Names

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**KEY WORKER ROLES**

Parent One \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Two \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Alternatively, please confirm your key worker role as a single parent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If possible, please note any particular considerations the school should be aware of if we need to manage who can access this offer of childcare support.

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Contact Details