



EDUCATION AUTHORITY SOUTHERN REGION

**MULLAVILLY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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**Dear Parents,**

You will no doubt be very aware of the information released by the Education Minister yesterday evening. In essence, this confirmed the closure of all schools, but with skeleton staff being available from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March to support identified Key Workers. This announcement was then followed by a letter to Principals in which the extensive list of key workers was highlighted.

As part of a national response, we are pastorally keen to support the Minister's request. It is worth bearing in mind that we have been instructed to close to minimise the risk of infection transfer at a time of national and global crisis. It is essential, therefore, that we are still able to comply with this ultimate reason for closure.

To inform that decision we need to be able to manage who can access the care, otherwise the original reason for closure of schools becomes meaningless.

Please consider the following guidance, and also be aware that guidance may alter later today if we receive more specific updates from the Education Minister.

**Points to consider**

- A list of key workers, issued by the Department of Education is listed below. Priority will be given to children with BOTH parents working as key workers and with both parents out at work at the same time.
- In single parent families, the main carer **MUST** be a key worker.
- Alternative childcare arrangements should be sought, before deciding to send your child to school, for example, with other family members, friends etc.
- **USE THE SCHOOL 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.
- School will NOT have wraparound services available. Normal working hours will apply
  - Primary 1 – 3 9am – 2pm
  - Primary 4 - 7 9am to 3pm
- Children attending will not be required to wear their school uniform.
- Children should bring their home learning pack.
- School meals will be provided.

Thank you for your understanding as we endeavour to work in partnership, but also safeguard the needs of our respective school community.

If not already done so please email me if you feel you are in the key worker categories and require child care.

We are grateful for the diligence, compassion and expertise of vital key workers and are mindful that many of you are under extreme pressure at this time. Please be assured you are in our thoughts and prayers.

Yours faithfully  
L McClimonds

**Key workers** are those who are maintaining essential public services during the Covid-19 response. The definition of key worker will be flexible and dependant on the circumstance and requirements over the course of this critical period. There will be flexibility shown on the definition of key workers to ensure all those who need support receive it. The list is not prescriptive. However, to give some guidance the following outlines the broad categories of what would be defined as a key worker;

- **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

**The aim is to keep the number of pupils coming into schools to a minimum.**