



20 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to provide you with an update on the most recent guidance from the Government. I appreciate that the key messages we have been communicating may have been confusing at times however the following is based on the most up to date guidance issued to schools.

As you are aware, the Government has directed **all** schools (apart from residential special schools and residential special colleges) to close to students at the end of the day on **Friday 20th March**. 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, in order 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.

We fully appreciate that this is very short notice and that your children may be feeling highly anxious and confused by this message. By the end of the afternoon we will try to speak to every student to explain the situation. As you may appreciate, due to the lateness of the guidance from the DfE this is not the way we would have planned to communicate with yourself, or your child. We will of course manage the information as appropriate to your child's needs.

Which groups of students are being offered childcare supervision?

This would be students who fall into two specific groups of students:

- Children whose parents or carers are critical to the Covid-19 response **and** cannot be safely cared for at home (key workers)
- Children who are vulnerable

Therefore, from Monday 23 March, **only** these children will be able to come to school.

What is the criteria for a key worker?

It is important to underline that schools remain **safe places** for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

Therefore, the government are asking that children are sent to school only if they absolutely have to be.

The Government definition of a key worker can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision> You may also find it useful to read the information page for parents and carers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

We have also attached both documents for you.

What to do if I am a key worker and want to send my child to school?

In the first instance, we will try to offer a provision at school. This will only be viable if we have the necessary staff to safely supervise the children of key workers. If, over the coming weeks, this is not possible, we will ask the Local Authority to support and find an alternative venue.

Therefore, for now, we would ask that parents or carers who believe they meet the key worker criteria and require their child to be supervised in school from Monday to contact us as soon as possible. Preferably, we will need to know by **6.00pm on Friday 20 March**, so that we can make the necessary arrangements for Monday. We apologise for the short notice with this but as you will be aware, we are responding to very tight Government deadlines and the guidance was only published last night.

Please email ioffice@isebrook.co.uk and in your email we will need to know:

- The name of each parent/carer (and the child/ren)
- The role that **each** parent/carer has
- The name and contact details including the address and telephone number of your employer
- The days that supervision may be required (this may vary depending on shift patterns/days of working) but we would ask that details for the next two weeks are provided if possible.
- A revised emergency contact name and number if the one that we have on our system is not currently valid (for example, if it is the details of someone who is self-isolating.)

When will I receive confirmation that my child can attend school on Monday?

We will review your request at the end of the working day today and contact you by email this evening to confirm that you have a place on Monday.

We will also contact transport to confirm arrangements for Monday, we would however recommend that you do this also.

Things to consider

Please note that there is **no obligation** to send your child into school if you are a keyworker. The advice is clear:

- There is a lower risk of the virus spreading if children stay at home. You may already have someone at home who can look after your child or you may, age depending, prefer them to stay at home and undertake their home learning there.
- There will be no penalties applied regarding absence for your child if you wish them to stay at home.
- Any students coming in to school will not be 'taught': they will be kept safe and be provided with the same work as other students who are learning from home.
- The provision will be offered in line with your current arrangements with SEN Transport, however there may be a reduced day and week depending on staff ratios.
- Lunchtime arrangements for students in school will be reviewed based on numbers. We will confirm the arrangements as soon as is practicable.

Supporting vulnerable students

We will be identifying those students who are in the second category and will be contacting their parents and carers separately. If you believe your child falls into this latter category and you have not heard from us by 3.00pm on Friday 20 March, please contact us on 07825915669 (Sharon Taylor).

Free School Meals

Over the next few days we will be in a position to update you further and provide additional information on ways we will be able to support your child during this time. In particular, we will be finalising how we can ensure that students entitled to Free School Meals will receive entitlement to food. We will be doing everything we can to deliver whatever is required of us by Government.

Home Learning

Over the next few school days we will communicate the details of the home learning arrangements.

Finally, we wish you all well. Please do take care of yourselves and your family in these unprecedented times. We are thinking of you all and are available to answer questions via Class Dojo or directly via ioffice@isebrook.co.uk . In the event of any concerns of a safeguarding nature please email or phone one of the following Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Sharon Taylor – staylor@isebrook.co.uk

Sarah Douglas – sarah.douglas@isebrook.co.uk

Tracy Hall – tracy.hall@isebrook.co.uk

Julie Fellows – julie.fellows@isebrook.co.uk

Jenny Barker – jenny.barker@isebrook.co.uk

Kevin Latham – klatham@creatingtomorrowmat.co.uk

Kind regards

Tracy Hall
Headteacher