

20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you already know, Trust schools will close from tonight for the majority of children. The Government has now issued further guidance around the Critical Worker list.

The Government's definition of a "Critical Worker" and a "Vulnerable Child" is extensive, and unless we prioritise, we will not be able to support the families and workers that require the most child care.

We have used the Government's official guidance as well as the Government's official list of critical workers to create a tiered system from Tier 1 to Tier 4. We have prioritised school staff within Tier 1 as they are needed to keep the child care system open. Our Tier list can be found at the end of this letter.

Current Government guidance regarding eligibility for school child care as of Monday 23rd March 2020 is that children with at least one parent or carer who are identified as critical workers by the Government can **potentially** send their children to school to be looked after if required. **However**, we must emphasise that the Government guidance also states that "many parents working in these critical sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. **Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.**"

Our aim is to support the Government in delaying the spread of the Coronavirus by physical distancing. We are providing child care for children of workers on the "critical list". We will be prioritising who we offer care to.

Parents who are "critical workers" will only be allowed to use the service whilst they are at work. If rest days fall between Monday and Friday, we will expect parents to look after their children at home.

In order to maintain fairness and transparency, where critical workers need child care, where possible, they provide school with proof of rosters/timetables.

Due to staffing issues across the Trust we are closing The Howard and Anson Primary School. Children who are from critical worker families or are on the vulnerable list will go to either Richard Crosse or St Mary's. The Howard children will go to Richard Crosse, and Anson children will attend St Mary's.

Richard Crosse and St Mary's will be open from 0730 – 1800 hours. As this is a care facility, parents will be able to drop their children off at the relevant school at any time to enable them to have child care whilst they are at work.

Critical workers will be allowed 32.5 hours childcare per week, anything above this will be charged at £5.50 per hour in line with our Care Club charges.

We will be offering child care for critical workers 7 days a week, and we will be open during the holidays to support the work of our NHS and other critical sectors. Children who are classed as vulnerable will attend Monday – Friday during term time, from 0900 – 1530.

We are pooling our staff to ensure that we can keep our child care provision open. We cannot guarantee that children will be cared for directly by someone from their own school.

These arrangements will be reviewed constantly and could be subject to change and the care offer reduced, e.g., no weekend / holiday cover.

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It is the duty of all of us to ensure that we minimise physical contact; the Government has closed schools to restrict movement and reduce contagion. It is not “business as usual”! There is no compulsion for the parents of vulnerable children or parents who are critical workers to send their children into school, and the use of this service should still be a “last resort” should other child care arrangements not be possible.

We will offer a cooked meal for children, and children who are eligible for free school meals will be given a meal as per the usual arrangements.

We ask that parents let us know if their children will require a school lunch.

We would appreciate your co-operation to ensure applications are only received from families of critical workers who do not have any other option in the form of child care.

If you believe that you are entitled to child care at school, please email your child’s school office by 3.30pm on Friday 20th ~March stating your child/ren’s name, the reason you believe you qualify for support, and the days and times you need child care for the week commencing 23rd March 20 and 30th March 20. As the situation progresses, we will ask for your child care needs for future weeks.

In the event of over subscription, which, based on the Government’s guidelines is no more than 20% of the school roll, we will have to prioritise the support we offer as to the Tier in which the critical worker falls into.

All applications will be assessed individually and will be overseen by the Trust Board, who will have the final say as to who can attend the setting.

I appreciate that we appear to be putting in place many rules and regulations, however the system is open to abuse and we want to prevent this. We are facing extremely challenging times and we all have our part to play. It is not “life as usual”, and we are all having to make sacrifices for the good of the most vulnerable people in society.

I urge you to continue to support us. If we are to defeat Coronavirus COVID-19, we have to listen and respond to the directives of the Government. Together we can beat this, and hopefully life can return to normal.

Stay safe, my thoughts and prayers are with all of you.

Yours sincerely,



Mr P J Lovern
Chief Executive Officer

The Small Schools Multi Academy Trust

Critical Workers			
Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctors • Nurses • Midwives • Paramedics • Social Workers • Care Workers • Machine Workers producing medicines/medical protective equipment • Support and specialist staff as part of medical administrative support who <u>category cannot</u> work from home • Nursery staff • Teaching staff • School staff and school catering staff who must remain active during the Covid-19 period to deliver this approach* • Social Workers • Food distributors • Food delivery drivers • Police and support staff • Ministry of Defence civilians • Contractor and armed forces personnel who are 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) • Workers responsible for the management of the deceased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & social care supply chain workers • Support and specialist staff as part of medical administrative support who <u>could</u> work from home • Food sale • Those involved in the production, distribution, sale and delivery of hygienic or veterinary medicines • Oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewerage) workers • Waste disposal sector workers • National Crime Agency staff • Border security • Prison and probation staff • Other national security roles including those overseas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those running the justice system • Air, water and road workers • Freight transport workers operating through Covid-19 responses • Telecommunications including call centre staff for 999 and 111 critical services • Specialist education professionals who aren't school based • Civil nuclear and chemical workers • Network operation and field engineering workers • Payment providers • Charity workers providing support and relief in relation to Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious staff • Journalists providing public service broadcasting • Broadcasters providing public service broadcasting • Local and national government administrators delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits including in government agencies and arms length bodies • Rail passenger workers • Essential financial services provision (including but not limited to banks, building societies, financial market infrastructure) • Information Technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response • Postal services and delivery workers

The Small Schools Multi Academy Trust

Vulnerable Children. A child who is/has...

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assigned social worker • An EHCP • Looked after 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously looked after 		

For children coming in to school as of Monday 23rd March, the following measures / precautions must be taken:

- Own clothes to be worn, which are fresh on – we recommend putting clothes straight in the washing machine once returning home from school to minimise and control the spread of infection.
- Up to date contact details for family members must be available within school and emergency contact details should your child become poorly / exhibit symptoms of contracting coronavirus.
- We must register your child in and out of the premises by somebody who either has parental responsibility or has been nominated by yourselves, as long as you are fit and well, and not showing symptoms of coronavirus.
- If you become unwell with coronavirus symptoms, you must **immediately** contact school and arrange for collection of your child.
- Physical distancing **must** be enforced whilst your child is not in school if we are to prevent / minimise the spread of infection.
- School **must** be informed if you no longer fall within the critical worker list, or you have been asked to self-isolate.
- Thorough hand washing to take place at home just before leaving the home.