

NAHT(NI) Interim Provision Guidance 20 March 2020

Coronavirus – maintaining interim provision in schools

You will be aware that the Education Minister, Peter Weir, made a number of announcements yesterday regarding the role of schools in making provision for the children of key workers. A list of Key Workers was published and can be found at the end of this letter. This list is far more extensive than had been anticipated and, as a result it is important to note the following information. Mr Weir also stated this morning *'For a lot of key workers they will have somebody at home, they will have the opportunity to maybe have a family member to look after them.'*

In an attempt to avoid chaos and unsafe environments, it is essential that the following guidance is adhered to.

It is the Principal's remit to prioritise places.

Schools will be offering reduced provision to children of key workers who do not have provision for their children to stay at home. Essentially childcare, as opposed to teaching and learning, will be provided in schools.

Given the very short notice of closure arrangements and the amount of information, communication and planning that is required, it may not be possible for individual schools to safely open on Monday 23rd March. If this is the case for your school, inform your parents of this decision as soon as possible so those key workers may make alternative arrangements.

Key worker parents requiring care provision:

Many parents working in the identified key workers list **may** be able to ensure that their child is kept at home.

EVERY CHILD WHO CAN BE SAFELY CARED FOR AT HOME SHOULD BE.

There is no requirement for identified key worker parents to take up this offer or send their children to school if they do not wish to.

Any children previously withdrawn from school on the basis of risk should not return.

Only children with BOTH parents working as Key Workers and only when both parents are working AT THE SAME TIME should their children attend school.

In single parent families, the main carer **MUST** be a Key Worker and be required at work.

Every alternative childcare arrangement should be explored before deciding to send children to school. School should, in effect, be a **LAST RESORT**. This is in order to comply with general **public health advice on social distancing**.

Wrap around services will not be available and schools will **only** be open for normal school hours.

Children who refuse to attend school must not be forced to do so. Schools cannot be expected to accept responsibility for those children that present a flight risk.

There will be no nurse or medical support available in schools.

Provision of any level of service will be dependent on staff availability and the school may have to be closed if this becomes a problem.

If you are a key worker and believe that you may need to avail of this reduced provision and believe you are eligible, please contact the school immediately.