

ARRANGEMENTS FOR OPENING BALLYTOBER FOR TERM 2....

Mr Peter Weir, the Education Minister, issued a statement earlier today announcing the revised plans for schools reopening after the Christmas break. These have been created in response to the increasing levels of transmission and numbers of cases. Whilst the new guidance has come somewhat late in the day, we fully acknowledge the challenges involved with the ever changing nature of the situation.

Apologies for any inconvenience caused by the new arrangements.

Monday 4th

Staff create home packs for other children to use throughout the week

Tuesday 5th to Friday 8th

School open for children of key workers/vulnerable children.

Tuesday 5th to Friday 8th

Children work remotely at home using home packs

Monday 11th

All pupils return to school for face-to-face learning

CHILDREN OF KEY WORKERS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

School will open on Tuesday 5th January for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. As before, the supervised learning environment will be provided for these pupils for the full week from 8.45am to 3.00pm.

The categories used to define parents or guardians as key workers remains unchanged. Please refer to the list below to decide whether or not your child would qualify for the in-school provision.

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 pre-school 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, banking and waste disposal;

FINANCIAL SERVICES This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure);

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.);

RETAIL This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses permitted to operate by the Executive from June 2020;

Other workers essential to delivering **KEY PUBLIC SERVICES** such as the National Crime Agency; and

KEY NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

The term "vulnerable" refers to :-

- A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.
- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public fund

Please contact me by Saturday morning if your child needs to come to school next week. This will give adequate time to make the necessary arrangements for each classroom base. Text me on 07892 834428, indicating how your child qualifies for the school-based supervision. Upon receipt of an expression of need, a care application form will be sent to you by email. This should be filled in before Tuesday morning. As before, we would appreciate that this provision is only accessed if you have EXHAUSTED EVERY OTHER POSSIBILITY. It should only be used when there are absolutely NO OTHER FEASIBLE OPTIONS.

PREPARATION OF HOME PACKS.....

Monday 4th will be used to prepare home packs for all pupils to use throughout the rest of the week. These will be similar to those sent home previously, although they will be somewhat smaller as it's only for the week. Collection times are yet to be finalised, although they will hopefully be ready at some stage on Monday afternoon. A text message will be sent out regarding specific collection times.

In the meantime, please contact me directly should you require any further clarification. Your continued support and patience is appreciated as we deal with the challenges created by the current situation. We genuinely hope that every possible measure is being taken by those in positions of power to ensure the disruption to the pupils' education is minimal.

May 2021 bring permanent solutions to the problems of a pandemic, and may we all see a return to greater normality in the not too distant future.

Elaine Anderson
Principal