

ST CHAD'S PATCHWAY CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Re: Remote learning/Critical worker places in school

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. Thank you so much to everyone who has logged on/collected school work and thank you to everyone who has been helping to support their children with their home learning, whilst juggling work and other responsibilities; we really do appreciate everything you are doing and understand how hard things are at the moment for the whole community. Remote learning-wise, as a school, we are legally required to provide learning for children at home during the pandemic. We will always provide more than is expected for those families who would like it, however we re-iterate that you have to make the balance between family life, your work/other responsibilities and remote learning so that it is best for you and your family. Your mental health and that of your family is of most importance to us at this current time; please know that we are here if you need to talk about anything or would like to discuss the balance.

Thank you for all of your feedback. We are overwhelmed by the positive comments that you are sending in about the provision and we thank you for taking the time to get in touch. We also thank you for any suggestions that have been sent in for us to consider remote learning-wise. Please note that to help reduce printing and the additional time taking photos of work, from next week, teachers will use Google docs (where possible) to upload work to Google Classroom. When you open the document on Google Classroom, your child will be able to type their answers straight onto the document and send it back to staff for feedback. There is also an App you can download for Google Classroom that may help you to upload photos to Google Classroom. You may, however, wish to continue doing what you are doing and that is also fine with us.

I'm sure you will have seen yesterday's figures, which continue to be alarming with 47525 cases along with over 1564 deaths, this as everyone knows is back to previous lockdown figures.

The law is that everyone has to **stay at home and work from home where possible** to start to bring down the transmission rates.

We currently have 62 children as vulnerable or critical worker children (a third of children on roll) who have indicated they need school provision and this is now increasing with requests coming in on a daily basis. During the last lockdown, the highest number of children we had on our registers was 11 but on average, only 7 children attended per day. This means that we need a significant number of staff in school for these children with bubble sizes which are much larger than we would hope.

We will always put the safety of the children and staff first. If there are days where critical workers are not working or where the non-critical worker parent is at home (working or not) - we are strongly requesting your children stay at home in order to minimise the amount of people in school and therefore reduce risk. This is now the message from the DfE and the local authority.



A place in school should be used as a last resort if you have no-one else in your childcare support bubble. If you are working from home, we ask that you keep your child at home for your family's safety as well as everyone's safety in school and the St Chad's community as a whole. The government list for critical workers seems extensive, however the over-arching rule is that these occupations have to be 'Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response.'

In light of the above, we are having to review our critical worker provision as a priority based service, please see below:

- All adults in your household are critical workers (we may have to request further confirmation from employers as to your role in the crisis).
- You have no capacity to care for your child at home.
- If you work part-time, you **must only** use the school on the days that you are working.

I understand the vast majority of families have already taken this advice into consideration and have made alternative arrangements. Many parents have re-arranged support bubbles, changed shift patterns and taken leave in order to keep their children at home. For this, we sincerely thank you. We have also spoken to many critical worker parents who have agreed to keep their children home on some days. I know not everyone will be able to do this but we are hugely grateful to these families.

On reflection, if you would like to reduce the number of days your child attends school or keep them at home full-time, please contact us to let us know.

We know that this will come as a blow to some of you, and this is far from the situation that we want to be in, but the safety of **everyone** has to be a priority and we must be following the law of 'Stay at Home.'

Kind regards,
Steph Jenkins
Headteacher

