

Key Messages for Schools and Parents:

- Schools and the Local Authority are working closely together to ensure we are able to meet the priorities as set out by the government.
- In Devon, we have already taken the approach that for next week (w/c 23rd March) the majority of schools will remain open to provide a safe place for vulnerable children and those of key workers.
- Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children, those with education, health and care (EHC) plans and some others recognised as vulnerable by the Local Authority and school.
- Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings will continue to care for children wherever possible. Schools will continue to liaise with parents about these arrangements.
- Information about closed schools can be found on the [DCC website](#). The school will inform parents of alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and key workers should they need to close. The Local Authority will also help co-ordinate this work but the school is the first source of information as local arrangements with other schools are being put in place. A Local Authority contact number will be set up to offer advice to parents.
- Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors. Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And the DfE advise that every child who can be safely cared for at home should be and they request we follow these key principles:
 - If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
 - Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.
 - Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.
- Children with at least one parent or carer who are identified as critical workers by the government can send their children to school if required.
- A list of key workers is provided by the DfE and can be found on this [link](#).
- Schools will be confirming, later today or next week, information regarding parents' keyworker role and if a parent intends to send their child to school this may include filling in an online form. Please refer to school level information for this.
- Current transport arrangements will continue to be provided for children attending school this week and next week for currently entitled children from the above lists. These will, until after Easter follow current timetables wherever possible.
- Families will be notified by individual schools or transport providers of any exceptions to the above.
- Information of any changes after Easter will be posted on the DCC website and via schools later next week or over the holidays
- Families are asked to look at individual school websites and their school's usual communication methods for other local updates and information.

- We are currently working with Early Years settings, special schools and FE colleges and will aim to provide further information for these age groups later today.
- Early years providers will given more information through the early years digest.
- We also aim to publish a list of frequently asked questions.
- The DfE have also provided easy to follow guidance to parents on this and a range of issues. The information can be found [here](#)
- Devon County Council Covid19 webpage :
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/document/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/>