



The Eliot Bank and Gordonbrock Schools Federation



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Dear Parents/carers,

20 March 2020

As you will be aware, the government has closed all schools in the UK until further notice. This is the case, **except for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.**

I realise this is distressing news for the entire school community and that it will leave many of us feeling anxious, but I want to reassure everyone that we have spent a great deal of time preparing for an announcement such as this. We will be doing our very best to ensure that we continue to support you and your children in the coming weeks and months.

The government published its list of key workers, defined as critical to the COVID-19 response, very late last night, so we are communicating it to you at the earliest opportunity. It lists the following critical sectors:

Health and social care

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

Education and childcare

This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

Key public services

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.



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Local and national government

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arm's length bodies.

Food and other necessary goods

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

Public safety and national security

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those 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), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

Transport

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

Utilities, communication and 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), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.



If you are in one of the groups listed above, school will be open, as usual, for your children on Monday 23 March 2020. If you are able to, please telephone or email the school, either today or over the weekend, to let us know that your child will be attending on Monday.

We are currently planning for how we can offer a service to look after the children of key workers and other children that the government wants us to keep in school next week; we will let you know what our plans are as soon as possible.

Staff have been working together this week to ensure that we have 'home learning' arrangements in place for all children – you will have received a letter about this yesterday. We have also been talking to the children who are still attending school, as far as we are able to, about what will happen next, doing our best to keep them calm and reassure them.

I am sure that you will join me in thanking all of our fantastic staff for working so hard at this difficult time, whether they are at home or in school. I would also like to thank you for kind words, in emails, on the telephone and at the school gates; we really appreciate your support at this time.

Yours sincerely,



Maria Gilmore
Executive Headteacher



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