



HILLINGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learning and Achieving Together

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Thursday 26th March 2020

Child Care Club for Key Workers Only

Dear Parent and Carer,

Are you a key worker?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Are you a key worker who needs child care? - Very important

The first key principle from the government guidelines:

1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.

That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

We are also working to the following guidelines which came out on the night of Tuesday 24th March, which is called [Implementing social distancing in education settings](#) and it clearly states:

Critical workers are defined as parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response, including those who work in health and social care and in other critical sectors. However, many parents working in these critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

It is our understanding that the key worker system set up by the Prime Minister and MP for Uxbridge and South Ruislip is to ensure that important key work continues especially the work of our parents in the medical profession. We fully support this work.

It is our understanding that we are required to offer a child care place for every key worker who needs it and does not have an option of alternative child care. We fully support parents in this situation and it is rewarding to know we are relieving at least one concern they may have at this difficult time.

However, essential child care is not there to enable partners of key workers to work at home or just be at home and send their child(ren) to school. We understand that some companies/universities are telling workers who are working at home, not to be involved in day to day child care. This is not acceptable. In this situation we ask parents to urgently speak with their companies/universities and explain the situation to enable flexible working. All companies/universities have a moral obligation to support parents and schools with child care. The spirit of essential child care in this unique situation is *not to* enable parents to work at home uninterrupted or for parents to have a 'break' from their children.

Our responsibilities as a school is to provide safe and secure child care for all those parents who need it at this difficult time. We wish to welcome children in and provide care and routine while their parents are out working. However, this can not be undermined by parents who use us when they have other options. We have to all do 'our bit' to break the transmission of this virus as we have been guided to do by the Prime Minister. By minimising the number of children and adults in school we keep those in school as safe as possible; it is much easier to practice social distancing with a small number.

Over this week we have decreased the number of staff needed in school. We have moved from 23 pupils on Monday to ten pupils on Wednesday. When a school opens for even one child we need a minimum of three members of staff as we have to consider safeguarding, welfare, premises and child minding needs.

All pupils who have accessed child care this week are now on a list for needing possible child care in the next few weeks/months. We have already asked parents who are key workers and have not accessed child care this week to telephone the school and speak with Mrs Childs (welfare) about possible future needs. You need to provide this information by **Friday 27th March (3.20 pm)** at the very latest so that you can be added to any future distribution list regarding child care. If you miss this deadline you may not be able to access essential child care until you have spoken with a member of our welfare team. If your circumstances change at any point and you become a key worker you should make contact with a member of the welfare team on the school telephone number.

You do not need to tell us what child care you need at this point; we would just like to put you on a distribution list and understand your particular circumstances. Apologies in advance if we seem to be asking for the same information a number of times. We will also need to ask very specific information about your circumstances to ensure child care is only being accessed by the appropriate families.

Last week the questionnaire was to establish approximate numbers so we knew how many staff were needed. This week we are aiming to confirm parents who are key workers and to understand their particular circumstances and that of any other adult living with your child, for example an adult sibling.

At this point we are planning for an Easter club for key workers. However, we are waiting for confirmation regarding Bank Holidays so we are consistent with all schools. We will update parents as soon as possible as we appreciate your need to plan.

Going forward child care provided will be from 7.30 am to 3.40 pm. The 4.30 Club is now closed. If parents require additional child care then they need to speak with our after school club provider, 'Special Treasures'. Information regarding this club is on our school website.

Our catering company, 'The Pantry' is providing a sandwich lunch for children attending our child care provision. These meals are *free* for all pupils. Parents can choose to provide a lunch for their child if preferred.

Once we have a list of key worker parents who need essential child care we will send out a booking form. This is a system that we hope to establish in the next few weeks so that we can create an easy and efficient system for you to use. We will send you confirmation of your booking. Again, apologies in advance if it does not run as efficiently as we would like in the first couple of weeks. If you have any concerns then please telephone a member of our welfare staff for further information.

I do hope our essential child care provision supports all our key worker families. Thank-you again for all the work that you do in providing these services to our community and beyond. For the rest of our community it is incumbent on us to do our part to look after our key workers and keep our school community as safe as possible.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Bowen-Breslin".

Ann Bowen-Breslin
Principal