



Tuesday 2nd March 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Re: Closure of schools due to Coronavirus - update for parents (Laxey / Dhoon School Federation)

We would like to thank you all for your patience at this difficult time.

As I am sure you heard today the Chief Minister ordered the closure of all schools for most pupils on the Isle of Man from the end of school today.

We know that parents/carers will seek to keep their children safe by keeping them at home and will follow the Government's advice. We very much appreciate your support in this and know that, if we all work together, we have the best chance of reducing the spread of COVID19.

The Government has asked parents to keep their children at home, and asked schools to remain open **only** for those children who are designated as 'vulnerable' or are the children of 'essential workers'.

It is important to understand that:

- **Schools are open only to vulnerable children and children of essential workers.**
- **Parents/carers should do all they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way that could spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.**
- **Many parents who are essential workers may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be kept safely at home should be.**
- **The fewer children making the journey to school and the fewer children in educational settings the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.**

Secondary and primary schools have been asked to stay open with staff to look after our most vulnerable children and the children of essential workers.

From Wednesday 3rd March 2021 children who are identified as vulnerable or whose parents are in the following groups can attend their normal school. I would like to reiterate that children of essential workers should only attend school if they are unable to be kept safely at home.

The Essential Workers list can be found overleaf:

Work Sector	If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision
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 Island'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 childcare, support 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.
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, contractor and (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), those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff.
Transport	This includes those who will keep the air, water, road 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 telecommunications sector (including but not limited to network operations, manufacturing and engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.
Miscellaneous Services	This includes those that are required for essential commercial cleaning staff who are deployed in any of the working areas of the categories listed above in order to allow them to function.
General Guidance	If workers think they fall within the critical categories above, they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

We would be grateful if you could let us know by email as soon as possible - laxeyenquiries@sch.im or dhoonenquiries@sch.im - if your child/ren fall within the above categories and indicate if your child/ren will be attending their normal school from tomorrow. Mrs Shimmin, Mr Astin and I will review all Essential Worker reasons to ensure compliance with Government advice; so once you have notified us, please assume that you have been given a place in school unless you hear differently.

For tomorrow, we ask that children attending school arrive the playground as usual where they will be met by a member of staff. The same times of the school day apply as usual.

School catering services are intending to provide meals in school as usual for **all children** who attend school and payments should be made via ParentPay in the usual manner. Additional cleaning arrangements will also be put in place.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding. We will still be here for you during these difficult and unprecedented times. We know you will work with us in partnership and hope you will help us in implementing the arrangements above.



Max Kelly
Executive Headteacher