



23rd March 2020

Re: Closure of Schools due to Coronavirus

Dear Parents and Carers,

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

As I am sure you heard yesterday the Chief Minister ordered the closure of most schools for most pupils on the Isle of Man from the end of school today. At the moment, we do not know when schools will reopen. 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 Covid-19.

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

It is important to understand that:

- If it is possible for children to stay at home then they should.
- Parents/carers should also 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 key workers may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. **Every child who can be 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.
- Parents can choose to keep children away from school without any concern of repercussion.

Secondary and primary schools with special need units attached have been asked to stay open with staff to look after our most vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

From Tuesday, the 24th March, children from **LAXEY SCHOOL** who are identified as vulnerable or whose parents fall in the key worker list below should attend **ONCHAN SCHOOL 8.50am – 3.30pm**. If attendance at this school presents a problem please let me know.

From Tuesday, the 24th March, children from **DHOON SCHOOL** who are identified as vulnerable or whose parents fall in the key worker list below should attend **BUNSCOIL RHUMSAA 8.50am – 3.30pm**. If attendance at this school presents a problem please let me know.

Key Worker List

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, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

In order to properly safeguard children and young people, pupils should not alternate between hub schools but, wherever this is possible, attend the same hub school each day.

If you are sending your child to the hub school tomorrow – please email us (Not the Hub school) as soon as is possible so that we have an indication of how many children to expect.

School catering services are experiencing high staff absence but are intending to provide packed lunches in school from Tuesday 24th March. Additional cleaning arrangements will also be put in place.

We know this is a worrying time, and we really appreciate your support and hope you will help us in implementing the arrangements above.

