

## Update 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Good morning,

I hope you are all well. I have had a few questions regarding the clarification of key worker & vulnerable places in school...which I completely understand. I know there are various WhatsApp groups etc raising the issue too.

The government has 'closed' schools due to the seriousness of the national situation. You know that all our staff would like every child with us every day in school but the bottom line is it is simply not safe at the moment. In many schools a handful of children are in school and all staff are working at home delivering remote learning. In our school applications for places are literally 10x what they were at the beginning of the first lockdown & all staff are in school. I am really worried.

Key Worker – advice starting to come into school is that school places should be given to critical worker families that have **no other childcare options**, therefore a family with only 1 critical worker does not necessarily need a place.

Vulnerable – not every child with an EHPC is 'vulnerable'. Schools should discuss the needs of individuals to keep the **school populations as low as possible**.

Yesterday I had a call from a doctor parent (his wife also works for the NHS). He said he had finished a double shift and was back at work that night...however, he could come and collect his child in the afternoon if that would help...obviously I replied, absolutely not! We are here for everyone who needs us but I am asking you to only use a space if it is essential. I am also concerned that with increasing numbers of children in school we are at greater risk of closing bubbles due to positive tests. My real worst nightmare is having to ring that doctor and say we have had to close his child's bubble and we can no longer provide any key worker provision.

Please can I ask:

- If you have applied for a space, is it absolutely essential?
- If you have asked for you child to be in school all week, could you manage with 2 or 3 days?

**If you can make any changes to your application, please just let your child's class teacher know.**

**Emails & Questions:** We have a high volume & we are trying to respond as quickly as possible.

If you have anything that is urgent please mark your email 'URGENT' and send it to me. If it is not urgent and it can wait a few days until things quieten down a bit that would be great.

**School Crossing Patrol:** No Mr Thompson so bubbles (for the chn who are in school) will exit via the main door next to the office. Children will still enter via the middle gate.

**Remote Learning:** The majority of children are working from home and remote learning is in place. Teaching assistants will be working with the bubbles in school for part of the time to release teachers to concentrate on remote learning. We looked at the various online learning platforms (Zoom/Teams etc) and decided on Class Dojo as the most appropriate for our teaching and our children's learning requirements. Plus, it's the only one where almost 100% of children can access.

Thank you for everything you continue to do I know how difficult things are for many of our families at the moment. Stay safe & well and hopefully this is all not for too long.

Lorraine Gowland