



6/1/21

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Having received notification from the Department of Education last night, I can now let you know of our plans for the coming weeks in West Winds PS and Nursery Unit.

Nursery

The Department of Education has instructed us that our Nursery unit is to close from this point on for face to face teaching and instead move to providing remote learning. This draws our Nursery unit into line with what is happening in the rest of the school.

Nursery Unit and Primary School

The Education Minister has stated primary and preschool pupils will be **taught remotely until the half term holidays in February**. School will therefore be closed to most children until then - with some exceptions detailed below.

Nursery Unit and Primary School - Remote Learning

For all children, remote learning will be delivered primarily through SeeSaw. Please contact your child's teacher directly should you require any assistance with login details etc. If you cannot do this, please make contact through the school office. Teachers, using SeeSaw, will guide the children through their work remotely for the week, setting tasks and responding to children's work each day. Teachers will be available between 9.00am and 2.00pm each day – they are your first point of contact in school.

Paper packs will be available for those families in P1-P7 unable to access work through SeeSaw. Nursery families have been/ will be provided with the Getting Ready to Learn packs, which provide appropriate activities for our Nursery children.

If you require a paper home learning workpack, please order one using the following online form.

[Order your home learning paper pack](#)

Orders should be made before 9.00am on Friday 8th January. Please complete a separate order form for each child who requires a pack.

This order will be to provide you with paper versions of our online work for the next two weeks. You will be able to collect a weekly pack with work for the week on Mon 11 and then on Mon 18th January. After this there will be another chance to order further packs.

Nursery Unit and Primary School -Childcare – Key Worker Children

School will remain open to provide childcare for children of key workers or children who are classed as vulnerable. A child of a key worker is a child for whom one of their parents is a key worker and who have no other safe alternatives for childcare. Definitions of key workers as set by the Department of Education are at the end of this letter.

The Department has instructed that children who qualify as children of key workers will not receive face-to-face teaching in school; they will simply be supervised in the school building, doing the same activities as the children who are at home. Teachers will be managing the remote learning so will not be engaged in face-to-face teaching with children who are in school.

I would encourage parents to explore all alternatives fully before sending their child to school for supervision and only send them if they meet the criteria and have no other safe alternative.

If you would like to request childcare provision for your child **in the next two weeks**, please complete the online Key Worker Childcare application form. We will issue this form every two weeks to allow parents to request childcare provision.

Applications for the next two weeks should be made before 9.00am on Friday 8th January

You can access this form here: [Key Worker Childcare Application](#)

Confirmation of the supervised childcare places will be given out on Friday 8th January. **Please do not send your child to school unless you have received this confirmation.**

Nursery Unit and Primary School -Childcare – Vulnerable Children

As above, schools are to provide childcare supervision for children who are classed as vulnerable. The definition of this, as stated by the Department of Education is included at the end of this letter.

If your child meets one of the criteria below and you have no other safe alternative, please complete the Vulnerable Childcare Application Form. We will issue this form every two weeks to allow parents to request childcare provision.

Applications for the next two weeks should be made before 9.00am on Friday 8th January

You can access this form here: [Vulnerable Childcare Application](#)

Confirmation of the supervised childcare places will be given out on Friday 8th January. **Please do not send your child to school unless you have received this confirmation.**

Remote learning

Staff are aware of the challenges of facilitating remote learning with children at home. Please do get in touch with us in school, through SeeSaw or the School Office, if there is anything we can do to help. We're not expecting perfection with home learning – just give it a go and see how you get on.

We'll be using our West Winds App as the major way of communicating about whole school issues – please ensure that you are receiving messages from us and that your notification setting is set so that you are alerted when a new message comes in. Let us know if you need help with the App.

Many thanks

Niall Manogue
Principal

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Department of Education Definition of a Key Worker (Jan 21)

- Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector;
- Education and childcare. This includes pre-school and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response;
- Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles;
- Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response;
- Utilities, and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, banking and waste disposal;
- 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);
- Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical, etc.);
- Retail. This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses permitted to operate by the Executive from June 2020;
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services such as the National Crime Agency; and
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

Definition of Vulnerable Child (as set out in the cross-departmental Vulnerable Children and Young People's Plan 2020.)

- A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.
- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.