

8 January 2021

Critical worker provision in schools

Dear Parents / Carers

I am writing to you regarding the numbers of critical worker (key worker) children attending our schools. A key reason for closing schools to all pupils apart from vulnerable children and children of critical workers is to break transmission lines and to help reduce the spread of the virus. The rationale behind asking schools to remain open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers is clear and essential to the well-being of these children and the ability of key workers to continue in their essential roles.

During this period of school closure to the majority of pupils, far more critical workers are sending their children into school than during the March 2020 lockdown. This has led to significant concerns that the transmission of the virus in our schools will not be sufficiently broken. Our pupils and staff still face the risk of being exposed to the virus and of contracting COVID-19.

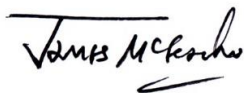
In order to support the principles of the lockdown and help our children and staff to stay safe, **I am asking parents who are key workers not to send their children into school, if they can be safely supervised at home and access online learning.** Government guidance states: 'Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can'. Please only send your child(ren) into school on days when they cannot be at home.

Since the last lockdown, our schools have developed their expertise in being able to provide high quality learning at home. Much of this is far more interactive than during the first lockdown and should require less input from parents at home.

If we do not keep the numbers of children at school at a more manageable level, we will have more cases in school, resulting in classes and bubbles needing to isolate at home. Similarly, if staff become ill or have to isolate, bubbles and classes may need to be sent home. Inevitably, this would prevent critical workers from carrying out their vital roles.

Thank you for your ongoing understanding and support.

Yours sincerely,



James McGeachie
CEO, Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT

