



BANWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Belong Believe Achieve

Headteacher: Mrs C Pocock

West Street, Banwell, North Somerset, BS29 6DB

Telephone: 01934 822498 Fax: 01934 825020

Email: office@banwellprimary.co.uk

Web: www.banwellprimary.co.uk



1 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Review of School Places during Lockdown

We are writing to all our critical worker parents to ask for your support in only booking places in school when they are absolutely needed please. Thank you to all parents who completed the form we sent last week to gather further information about their critical worker status.

We are currently having a significant increase in the number of requests for school places during lockdown. For example, today we have 25% of our children coming into school; the average number of children nationally attending primary schools during lockdown is 20%. Please can I again ask that families only book spaces on the days needed. Some families are booking 5 days a week, every week, when this may not be necessary. Please also remember that if there is an adult at home a space in school should not be taken.

We understand the challenges that many parents and carers are facing with juggling work and home schooling and fully appreciate these are difficult times for all. However, to limit the amount of social contact in our community thus reducing the opportunity for the virus to spread, we have been given clear guidance as to which children should be in school. Due to the significant increase in requests, from next week we will be following a priority order when allocating spaces.

The priority order will be as follows:

1. **Vulnerable children***
2. **Children of single parent families where the parent is a critical worker and children from families where both parents are critical workers.**
 - a) **Children of workers from Health & Social Care**
 - b) **Children of workers from Education & Childcare**
 - c) **All other Critical Worker Categories (subject to verification by the school that the employment satisfies the government's definitions of critical work).**
3. **Children from families where one parents is a critical worker.**
 - d) **Children of workers from Health & Social care**
 - e) **Children of workers from Education & Childcare**
 - f) **All other Critical Worker Categories (subject to verification by the school that the employment satisfies the government's definitions of critical work).**



**Please Note: The government's definition of a 'Vulnerable Child' gives scope for individual schools to make their own decisions about who to invite into school. Our 'vulnerable list' is not fixed – children may become 'vulnerable' for a time because of bereavement, family illness or other circumstances – and we have the capacity to invite children into school for a period of time if our understanding of their circumstances merits a place. These decisions are made by a number of key staff together.*

Please respect the right to the privacy of all our families and children by not trying to 'second guess' why some children are in school and some are not.

We will notify families individually where we are not able to offer a space for their child.

Please could we again stress the importance of families who are sending their children into school to adhere to the national lockdown guidance. We have had children telling us today about visiting relatives at the weekend and staying overnight. We want to keep all families and staff as safe possible so that means everyone in the community must follow the rules.

Schools across the country have now spent the best part of a full year making truly tough decisions; decisions which we know will have a direct and deep impact on individual families and children. What school staff want more than anything else is to have all children back in school where they belong. Whilst this is not possible at the moment, we will continue to do our utmost to manage this exceptional situation in the best way we can.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding during these difficult times. Please continue to be kind to yourselves and remember that even if your child is not in school we are still here to help.

Best wishes,

Claire

