 

**BANWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Belong Believe Achieve**

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Dear Parents/Carers

**School Shutdown – Information about Childcare for Critical Workers and Vulnerable Pupils**

Thank you for your patience and understanding at this very difficult time. As you know, the Government has announced that it expects most families to manage childcare whilst schools are closed from Monday 23rd March 2020. **The government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.**

It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But 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.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - **children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.**

**CRITICAL WORKERS**

The government has now published a list of critical workers. This is published below:

**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 UK’s health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributers of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

**Education and childcare**

This includes nursery 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 arms-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, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (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), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

**Transport**

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger 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 civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (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.

If workers think they fall within the critical categories above they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

The guidelines state that children with at least one parent or carer who is identified as a critical worker by the government can send their children to school, if required.

**VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

The government have clarified that vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, ‘looked after’ children, registered young carers, disabled children and those with [education, health and care (EHC) plans](https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help).

There is a form attached that we ask you to complete and send back to school by lunchtime today please, either in paper form or as an email. This will enable us to plan for the emergency childcare for next week and beyond.

Many thanks for your continued support and understanding during these challenging times. Please continue to check the website and your email for updates.

Yours sincerely

Claire Pocock

Headteacher