



WALTON HIGH

Leading Learning

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Dear Parents

COVID-19: Update 6

This morning the Government eventually issued the guidance on providing childcare for key workers.ⁱ

The guidance is very clear that this provision is **only for those whose role is considered essential and who are unable to make their own childcare arrangements** as well as those children considered vulnerable. It is our view that students in Year 9 upwards are old enough to take care of themselves, therefore the child care arrangements Walton High is putting in place is only for students in Years 7 and 8.

The Government's guidance is as follows:

*Parents whose work is **critical** to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. **Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.***

Please, therefore, follow these key principles:

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.*
- 2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.*
- 3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.*
- 4. **Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.***
- 5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.*

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision:

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 distributors 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.

If your school is closed then please contact your local authority, who will seek to redirect you to a local school in your area that your child, or children, can attend.

We are grateful for the work of teachers and workers in educational settings for continuing to provide for the children of the other critical workers of our country. It is an essential part of our national effort to combat this disease.

If you believe your occupation falls into one of the categories above, **and your role is critical to the COVID-19 response**, please complete the form that accompanies this letter by **10:00 on Saturday, 21 March at the latest**. Completed forms should be sent to childcare@mket.org.uk.

In the event that there is more demand for places than we can accommodate safely, priority will be given to frontline medical staff.

Only parents of students who have submitted a completed form **and have received confirmation of a place**, may send their child(ren) to school on Monday. The school's minibus service will not be running so parents will be responsible for getting their child to and from school. Subject to capacity, parents may choose to send their child to either the Walnut Tree campus or the Brooklands campus.

Our aim is to provide childcare on weekdays from 07:30 to 18:00.

Only children who are well should attend school and we reserve the right to take a student's temperature at the beginning of the day or at any point during the day. Any child with a raised temperature will be sent home and will not be able to return for at least 7 days. Children in households where one or more person is self-isolating should also not attend for at least 14 days.

We will obviously be expecting children to be on their best behaviour and follow the same social distancing principles as adults, i.e. staying at least 2m away from other people and have excellent hygiene throughout the day. Any child failing to meet our expectations will have their place withdrawn immediately.

My colleagues and I should like to thank those parents who are caring for the sick and vulnerable at this difficult time. We will continue to do our best to support our students and their families.

Kind regards



Michelle Currie
Executive Principal

ⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>