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| **OUR LADY’S PRIMARY SCHOOL****12 MILLTOWN ROAD****BENBURB, DUNGANNON****CO.TYRONE** **BT71 7NJ****Tel/Fax: 028-37548237****E-mail:** **info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk****Website:** [**www.ourladyspstullysaran.com**](http://www.ourladyspstullysaran.com)**Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee** | OurLady |

23rd March, 2020

**Reference: Coronavirus – ‘Supervised Learning’**

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to you regarding guidance which was published by the Department of Education on Friday 20th March in relation to schools providing **‘Supervised Learning’** for the children of **‘Key Workers’.**

The guidance stated that the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of **COVID-19** is clear*.* ***If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.*** That is why the Stormont Executive 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, as a **‘last resort’**. 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 the community and wider society.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide supervised learning 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.***

For the purpose of the guidance, the term *vulnerable* encompasses those children who are in need of protection, or in need, as defined by the Children (NI) Order 1995.

*Parents whose work is critical* to *the COVID-19* response includes 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 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.

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 prioritized for education provision: Key workers are those who are maintaining essential public services during the Covid-19 response.

This is the current list of Key Workers (as per DENI guidance 20th March, 2020):
• 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 nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid19 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, services and waste disposal
• 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.)
• Other workers essential to delivering key public services
• Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

If your child(ren) is/are *vulnerable*, as per the guidance, or you are a *‘Key Worker’*, as above, and *you have no other form of child care available considering that the government’s advice is that children should remain at home*. You should complete the response slip below and email it to me (tmckee362@c2kni.net) by 2pm on Monday 23rd March. I will then contact you on Tuesday 24th March.

I must inform you that we may **work with other local schools,** to facilitate a very limited number of places which will be guided by the number of staff available. This means that the ‘Supervised Learning’ **may not always take place in our school**. Such places will be strictly for the children of ‘Key Workers’ who have no other childcare options. Children must not come to school if they are unwell or any member of the family is unwell or a member of the ‘at risk’ group.

We are living in difficult times and as a school we aspire to support our community particularly our ‘Key Workers’ at this critical time although this must be done safely and in the best interests of everyone in our school community.

Please contact me if you have any queries, concerns or suggestions and remember to email me by 2pm today. Thank you.

Take care and all the best

Tomás Mc Kee

**Tomás Mc Kee**

**Principal**

 **‘Supervised Learning’ Response sheet**

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| **Child(ren)’s Name(s)**  |  |

Please explain how your child(ren) meet/meets the criteria for ‘Supervised Learning’ and confirm that you have no other alternative child care provision. Could you also state what days you will require this provision. Thank you.

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| Please confirm that your child has no underlying health problems as per government guidance. |  **Yes or No** |
| **Comment** |
|  |
| **Name** |  | **Date** |  | **Mobile Number** |  |

**(Please email to** **tmckee362@c2kni.net** **by 2pm on Monday 23rd March. Thank you.)**