

20 March 2020

Dear parents/carers,

### Coronavirus update – Key Worker List

The list of ‘key workers’ was released overnight by the government and I have included a link to the guidance for your information <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>.

The key element of the advice is that, even if your profession is on the list, we ask that you keep your child at home where possible. This will also help to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus as children can carry the disease without knowing it.

In light of this, we will be prioritising pupil places, where both parents or a single parent household have professions on the key worker list. Please let your child’s headteacher know as soon as possible if you think you fall into this category.

There are still some anomalies, but there is a specific point in the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, shown below, which clarifies our position and explains the reasons behind the Trust’s decision about vulnerable pupils:

#### ***“1.10 Does this apply to special schools?***

*We recognise that children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and their parents and carers are facing numerous challenges as a result of Coronavirus. We are encouraging local authorities to keep open both residential special schools and residential specialist colleges wherever possible. In addition, we want to keep the majority of day special schools and colleges open, including moving staff into these settings to avoid closure.*

***Special schools, colleges and local authorities are advised to make case by case basis assessments of the health and safeguarding considerations of pupils and students on an education, health and care (EHC) plan. For some, they will be safer in an education provision. For others, they will be safer at home. We trust leaders and parents to make these decisions and will support them as required.”***

We are also applying this advice to the pupils in our alternative provision academies.

This is designed to reduce the number of people together in one place; it is not because we do not wish to help. We believe by supporting our most vulnerable pupils and children of key workers, we can provide this service.

Staff numbers in our academies are reducing on a daily basis due to self-isolation, social distancing and sickness. Therefore, we must prioritise those pupils and families most in need of support. We will be continually reviewing the situation with a view to improving our offer to families, but this will be subject to our staff numbers and keeping our sites safe.



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Our academies are currently reviewing which children will be able to attend school from Monday 23 March and they will contact those families directly. Please do not send your child in to school after today unless you are advised to do so.

I ask for your patience and understanding at this very difficult time. Our academies are doing their best to support our families in these very challenging circumstances.

We have created a page for parents, carers, family members and students of our Esteem academies. This page is to help us to support each other through this difficult and unprecedented time. There will be tips and tricks to help keep you positive and motivated; from motivational songs and quotes to 5 minutes meals using cupboard basics and easy arts and crafts ideas. We ask that you be respectful to other people accessing this site and enjoy! If you have any suggestions that you think others may find useful, please do contact them using Messenger. The page is called **Esteem Early Help** or follow this link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1654214071393945/>.

Thank you for your continued support and co-operation.

Yours faithfully

Julian Scholefield  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Esteem Multi-Academy Trust**