20.3.2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

**Supporting Children of Key Workers in Rosstulla School**

Last night Minister for Education in Northern Ireland, Peter Weir MLA, made a statement outlining how schools will close from the end of the school day tomorrow, Friday 20th March, however, will open with skeleton staff on Monday 23rd March to support identified Key Workers.

Firstly, we are committed to supporting our school community as best we can and will work hard at getting some provision in place as soon as we possibly can. Please note, this may not be up and running by Monday morning. We want to be fully confident that all procedures are in place to secure a safe environment for those in our school.

Firstly, it is vitally important that we are aware how many children of key workers might require a space. With this in mind, if you are an identified key worker (see list below)with no alternative childcare, please inform the school by 12 noon **on Friday 20th March** via the [info@rosstullass.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@rosstullass.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk)

Please state the type of employment both parents are in and state a reason why you are unable to secure other childcare.

Based on the number of requests for a place and the number of available staff the school will prioritize who we can offer places to. This may change on a daily bases depending on our staffing.

Before contacting school, **please pay particular attention to the following points**.

* We will not be able to operate a ‘normal’ school day as we have a significant reduction in staffing and this will probably continue to get worse over time.
* A list of key workers, issued by the Department of Education is listed overleaf. Only children with **BOTH** parents working as key workers, and **both parents out at work at the same time** will be considered for a place. In single parent families, the individual parent **MUST** be a key worker.
* If possible, alternative childcare arrangements should be sought before deciding to send your child to school. For example, with other family members, friends etc. Please try and use schools as a last resort. **This is to try and limit the number of children and adults together in a small space in line with recent social distancing guidance.**
* Please be advised that schools will be performing childcare duties, rather than teaching, as not all teachers are currently available to teach specific year groups and teachers must also be available to provide online / remote learning.

Some outstanding uncertainties:

It is unclear if transport would be provided for your child

It is unclear if a school meal would be provided

We predict that the provision would be available only between the hour of 9am and 3pm.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Laura Matchett

Principal

**LIST OF KEY WORKERS AS OUTLINED ON DOCUMENTATION ISSUED TO SCHOOLS ON 19TH MARCH 2020**

**Please work with us to ensure that schools operate with a limited number of children and staff.**

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 Covid-19 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)

Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.