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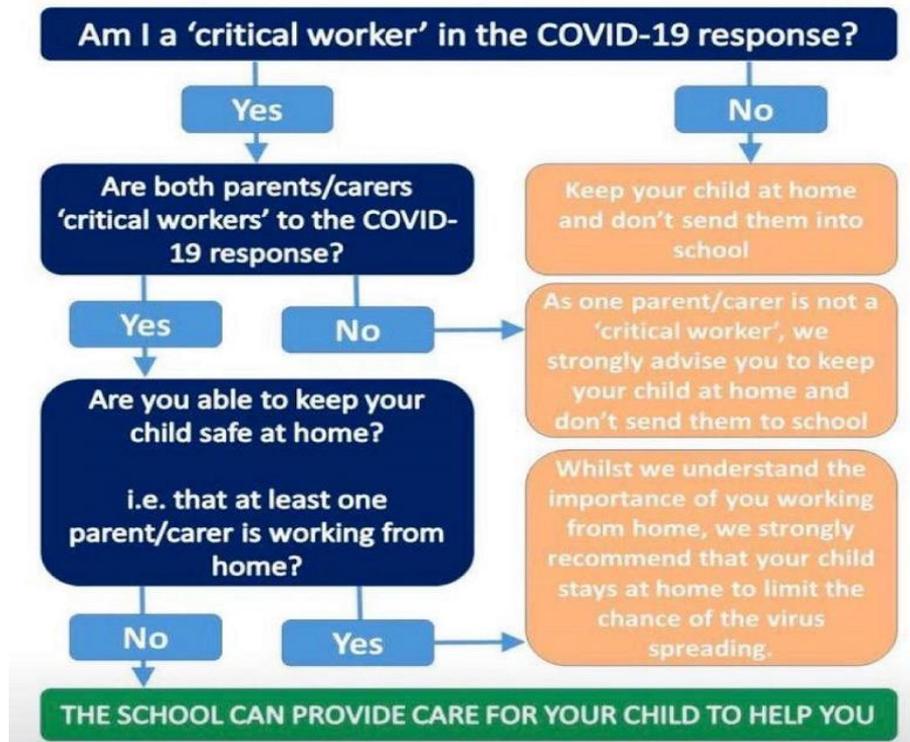
Date: Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear parents and carers

On behalf of the local authority, our schools/settings and the many vulnerable residents within our borough, we would like to thank you for, in the vast majority of cases, keeping your children at home. We appreciate the additional challenges that this will bring but it is essential if we are to limit the spread of coronavirus and ensure that the NHS is not overwhelmed.

Schools, settings (including early year's settings, childminders and providers of childcare for school-age children), colleges and other educational establishments are closed for the foreseeable future. The exception to this is to provide child care for children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home **where there is no alternative**.

Our message to you is clear, **all** families are required to keep their children at home - use of the school can only be offered if there is no safe alternative. The flow chart below will help you to decide if it is absolutely necessary to send your child to school or early year's provision.



Although the chart above strongly encourages care for your child at home where only one parent or carer is a key worker, we do appreciate that this is not always possible. We have asked our schools and childcare settings to be flexible in their approach in these situations, especially where the key worker works for the NHS.

If a school or setting is unable to open, the local authority will coordinate provision within your local area. You will find more information for parents and carers on the [DfE website](#).

Please remember, you **must** keep your child at home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

Please see the [NHS website](#) for further information including the requirement for the whole household to self-isolate for 14 days if anyone has symptoms.

It is important that you remind your child to wash their hands more often - with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser when they get into school, blow their nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food. Difficult though we know it is, children should also be observing the 2 meter distancing from each other where at all possible.

Once again, we are grateful to you for all that you are doing to follow government advice as closely as possible. We know that all of us will need to make sacrifices over the coming weeks and months as we face the challenges that lie ahead.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Tennant  
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Director of Children Services and Skills