

Our Ref: Covid19(3)/HS/KJR/TC/CS

19th March 2020

Dear Colleagues,

As promised yesterday, I am writing to update you and will be communicating regularly with you over the next few days. The requirements placed on schools to remain open for the children of 'key workers' and for 'vulnerable children' is a significant organisational and workforce challenge, particularly in a large rural county like Lincolnshire.

I want to begin by saying that as an education system, we are highly unlikely to get this right for everyone by Monday but I am really grateful for the responses we are getting from school leaders about their commitment to doing all that you can for Lincolnshire at this time.

There are several strands to be considered:

Providing open schools for children of key workers and vulnerable children

- Once the definition of key workers and vulnerable children is clarified by DfE, schools should gather this information from parents/carers and their own records and include these figures when requested to do so by us.
- You will need to know how many school employees are available to work on-site or from home. There will be clarity given to adult pupil ratios and essential roles needed. e.g. DSL, qualified first aider.
- You may need to consider alternative work patterns, clustering, cross school working but all of this can evolve over the coming weeks – it does not need to be locked down by Monday.
- Easter opening was mentioned – we need to consider that later when we have more details.
- We are developing mechanisms for schools to inform us of demand and pressures so we can coordinate responses in geographical areas.

Providing meal provision for children who are eligible for FSM (not universal FSM)

- Schools should identify and include these figures when requested to do so by the LA.
- Schools should consider how the meals will be provided to the child i.e. use of current meal provider, vouchers or other. You will need to consider the coordination of this.

I appreciate this information will not answer all of your questions at this time, however, until further clarification is received from the Government, we are following a staged response in anticipation of what this might be.

From Monday, all communications will be via 'Perspective Lite' in case of issues with email connectivity. Please ensure you and your users have enabled access to this system and can do this remotely.

We value all your efforts and cooperation at this challenging time and together we will work to find the best possible way forward.

We will be in contact as soon as we possibly can, before 4pm hopefully.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "H. Sandy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'S'.

Heather Sandy
Executive Director for Children's Services
Lincolnshire County Council