

Our Ref: Covid19(4)/HS/KJR/TC/CS

19th March 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing, as we have had updates from the Department for Education. This has enabled us to provide limited clarity that we would want to share with you to support your preparations.

The Department for Education has requested that the Local Authority take a lead in terms of communication, co-ordination and reporting of the retracted school provisions. Therefore, please expect and check for communications and requests over the next few days and weeks, as we try and support one another to make the best of this difficult situation.

So, where we are at:

- It is expected that all settings will be open from Monday 23rd March 2020 for children of key workers and who are deemed as vulnerable. We are still waiting on definitions of 'key worker' and 'vulnerable'. This information is imminent and if not issued by the DfE by Friday, the LA will give guidance in defining these groups (subject to change on DfE announcement)
- We know that the DfE will be setting up a national mechanism to feed data into the centre. This will come online shortly for schools to submit numbers of pupils from key workers and vulnerable groups to monitor the take up and demand in areas. It will also allow us to ensure transport is provided as appropriate.

We have asked the DfE for further clarification on the following matters:

- Staffing ratios for each establishment and expectation of key roles in each building
- Minimum requirements expected for site functionality e.g. catering, cleaning, maintenance
- Clarification on social distancing requirements with regard to schools and transport arrangements.

What we need you to do now:

We are very grateful for positive responses from schools.

- If you believe you are not able to open on Monday, you must inform us of this by 10am on Friday, 20th March by completing the attached forms which will be shared with the DfE for further action. Once completed please send to EducationTeam@lincolnshire.gov.uk

- Tomorrow, we will share the 'key workers' list to support you in identifying who they are and details of their children
- Watch out for further communications asking for information that we require e.g. transport requirements for eligible pupils.

The Local Authority appreciates that this moveable situation has created additional demand. We ask that you support us as we respond to the situation with the limited information that we have.

Thank you again for showing such creativity and positive engagement as a sector; so many have of you started to form really comprehensive plans to adapt and evolve, whatever comes our way.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "H. Sandy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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