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Headteacher: Joanna Goodfellow

Dear Parents

Thank you for your patience and understanding at this difficult time. As a school we are working tirelessly to put a safe strategy together reacting to the ever changing COVID-19 virus advice from central government. The Department for Education released the following guidance yesterday evening.

*As a country, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. That is why the government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, household isolation and social distancing.*

*And the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear:*

***If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.***

*That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open **only** for those children who **absolutely** need to attend.*

*It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.*

*Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a **limited** number of children - children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.*

*Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans. We know that schools will also want to support other children facing social difficulties and we will support head teachers to do so.*

*Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined below. Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. And every child who can be safely cared for at home should be. Please, therefore, follow these key principles:*

- 1. If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.***
- 2. If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.***
- 3. Parents should not rely for childcare upon those who are advised to be in the stringent social distancing category such as grandparents, friends, or family members with underlying conditions.***

- 4. Parents should also do everything they can to ensure children are not mixing socially in a way which can continue to spread the virus. They should observe the same social distancing principles as adults.**
- 5. Residential special schools, boarding schools and special settings continue to care for children wherever possible.**

If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, or you work in one of the critical sectors listed below, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for education provision:

#### **Health and social care**

*This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.*

#### **Education and childcare**

*This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.*

#### **Key public services**

*This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.*

#### **Local and national government**

*This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies.*

#### **Food and other necessary goods**

*This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).*

#### **Public safety and national security**

*This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.*

#### **Transport**

*This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.*

#### **Utilities, communication and financial services**

*This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil*

*nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.*

*If workers think they fall within the critical categories above they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.*

*If your school is closed then please contact your local authority, who will seek to redirect you to a local school in your area that your child, or children, can attend.*

*We are grateful for the work of teachers and workers in educational settings for continuing to provide for the children of the other critical workers of our country. It is an essential part of our national effort to combat this disease.*

The places at our school will be very limited therefore we need to prioritise those children whose parents' **work is critical to the COVID-19 response** and who cannot keep their child safe at home.

**We would expect that parents have exhausted all other options before using this scarce emergency provision.**

**To put this in perspective, our staff will be risking their lives and the lives of their families in order to provide this childcare therefore we need to be convinced that it is going to make a significant difference.**

**We would expect that no parent would choose to send their child to emergency childcare provision to mix with other children unless they had absolutely no other choice as they are placing the children and those who they may come into contact with at risk.**

If you would like to be considered for emergency childcare provision because your work is **critical to the COVID-19 response** and you cannot keep your child safe at home and have exhausted all other options, please contact school today. Please note that evidence will be required from your employer that your specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

Please email a supporting statement from your employer to [admin@bartonclough.trafford.sch.uk](mailto:admin@bartonclough.trafford.sch.uk) clearly confirming that your specific role is critical to the COVID-19 response and that it is not possible for you to work from home [this must be done for both parents in two parent families].

We are not in a position to be able to safely offer provision for high needs pupils, those with medical needs or other complex needs due to the nature of the staffing model and this has been discussed with individual parents. Many of these children are very high risk and have been advised to adhere to the social distancing protocols. The Local Authority may be able to provide alternative childcare where we are not able to offer it.

Thank you for your continued efforts to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The emergency childcare provision will run from 9.00am – 3.15pm Monday – Friday and we will be in touch to confirm whether your place has been approved. Further details of the provision to follow including plans for the Easter holiday period.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Goodfellow', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mrs J Goodfellow