



# Ivy Lane School

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Head of School: Mrs Helen Lammin (BSc Hons QTS)

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Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

## Re: Critical Worker Provision in School

We are glad to have been able to settle relatively smoothly into a new routine, offering in-school provision for our vulnerable children and those from our critical worker families whilst providing remote teaching to all our children at home. We have been able to reach this point thanks to the tireless efforts of all the Ivy Lane staff in preparing and improving our systems whilst adapting to ever-changing circumstances and guidance from the Department of Education.

What is clear from this week, however, is that the number of children eligible to attend school under the critical worker provision is much higher than during the first lockdown. We therefore need to ensure that we can accommodate those **most in need** whilst recognising that we must continue to do everything that we can to keep staff and pupils **as safe as possible in school** in light of recent Coronavirus developments.

As I am sure you will understand, running a dual system of educating children in school whilst providing remote learning to those children at home, places an additional logistical staffing burden on the school. Teachers need to be deployed to remote teaching, alongside teaching in the classrooms for those being educated in school. I must make it clear that this provision is not **childcare**. The extremely rapid rate of transmission of the virus at the moment, means that we must do everything we can to protect our school community: children, parents and staff alike.

The latest guidance from the Department for Education has been updated in the last 48 hours reiterating that whilst children with parents or carers who are critical workers can go to school if required, parents and carers who are critical workers **should keep their children at home if they can**.

For our part, **we must stress that places in school for critical worker children are limited and we ask that you only take up a place if absolutely necessary**. As a community, we must ensure that there is space for our healthcare workers' children and other vital roles such as social care that are actively helping to fight the pandemic. We want to ensure that we prioritise those with the most **urgent need**.

Therefore, we are now asking you to review your needs and **consider only sending your child to school if it is absolutely necessary in order to carry out your critical worker role**. We may need to ask parents/carers to provide individual evidence of their critical worker status using the published guidance, and we will review this alongside the guidance and needs of the school. Parents/carers should discuss any continuing difficulties with their own employer's HR department.



It is our desire to accommodate parents/carers needs as far as possible whilst keeping children and staff in school safe, however, just like other schools nationally, we are balancing difficult priorities. While we have carried out all the required risk assessments and put the relevant procedures in place to keep school safe, we recognise that younger children in particular find it very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain social distancing. For this reason, if we can find ways to reduce the number of children in school on any day, especially in the younger groups, this would reduce even further the risk of spreading infection. I would not want to be in a position whereby I do not have enough staff to support this provision in school.

**Please take some time as soon as possible, to review your own situation and consider where you can reduce your need.** Please send any updates to us as soon as possible via [admin@ivylane.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ivylane.wilts.sch.uk) to enable us to plan for the weeks ahead.

Thank you in advance for your help and support to ensure we keep our numbers of children and household contacts to the very minimum during this very unsettling time.

Yours Sincerely



Mrs H Lammin  
Head of School

