

HITHERFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

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8th January 2021

Dear Parent and Carers,

RE: Critical Worker and Vulnerable Children Childcare – Applications for 18th January to 29th January 2021

The Government has now announced the closure of all Primary schools until the 22nd February 2021 so Hitherfield will continue running its Virtual School and its Critical Worker and Vulnerable Children childcare. When Lambeth schools were closed late on Friday 1st January we opened the applications for the Critical Worker and Vulnerable Children childcare to families who applied at the start of term for the eight-day closure period up to Friday 15th January. Now that we have entered a full national lockdown, we will be allocating places, on a fortnightly basis, using a system of levels until there is a national review.

If you have previously applied for a place **you will need to re-apply for the period commencing 18th to 29th January 2021 inclusive, by 10am on Monday 11th January, and on a fortnightly basis going forward. You will also need to apply separately for each individual child you wish to attend.** We have received an extremely high demand for places and it is unlikely that we will be able to offer provision to all those who request it. Therefore, we have no option but to limit numbers, so that we are able to keep the adults and children safe. Although children are not high risk, schools are said to be 'vectors of transmission' and we must therefore do all that we can to reduce transmission by minimising the risk for our whole school community. It will not help anyone if we have to close a Critical Worker and Vulnerable childcare bubble due to a positive case of Covid, though this remains a distinct possibility in the future.

Please note:

- **It is important that you apply by the deadline each time as we will have little flexibility beyond this point. Late applications will not be accepted.**
- We will use a system of levels to prioritise places as explained in the table below.
- Those places are intended for families who have **no other adult at home** to look after the children and who are immediately required in the response to this virus. Regardless of your critical worker status, if there is an adult at home you **may not** be offered a place.
- We reserve the right to request additional information directly from your workplace to confirm that you are needed on site, including shift patterns etc. and will ask you to provide full details in your application for a place.
- The safest place for children to be is at home at this time. Mixing with other children will heighten the risk of infection for both adults and children and should be avoided unless there are **NO OTHER OPTIONS**. Covid cases on Wednesday 6th January 2021, topped 62,000 for the first time since the pandemic started. The latest data estimates one in 30 people in private households in London had Covid between 27th December



and 2nd January and 6th January a further 1,041 people have died. This is an extremely serious and volatile situation and one that we need to work together to bring under control.

- School staff will be under great pressure during the closure period. They are providing high quality online learning which requires them to be working full time as well as supporting key worker and vulnerable children in school. We would ask that, whilst understanding how challenging and difficult the current situation is for everyone, you ensure that staff are continued to be treated with kindness and respect. If there are specific issues that need addressing, response times will be slower than usual. Please do not use social media to vent frustration. Contact us and we will try our very best to resolve any issues you may have.
- Some places will be filled by children of Hitherfield staff who are required to support the Virtual School and critical workers' children and vulnerable children.
- Vulnerable children will be offered support either on site, with IT support, through the Virtual School and through additional specialised contact.
- We will be contacting parents/carers of vulnerable children where we are able to offer provision.

If you are identified as a key worker, your family may qualify for your child(ren) to receive childcare while the school is closed. In order for us to adequately staff and resource this provision we need you to complete the online application as soon as possible and no later than 10am on Monday 11th January 2021. **Please complete a separate form for each child.**

Click on this link to the latest application form: <https://forms.gle/Qr8yxkusHghfjZTs9>

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Ashley-Jones
Executive Headteacher



Critical workers and vulnerable children – priorities and levels

LEVELS	Descriptor
Level 1 – will be allocated a place first	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NHS frontline clinical staff or administrators (e.g. NHS 911 etc) working directly with coronavirus patients ● First responders (i.e. paramedics or those who support them) ● Police officers and some civilian police staff (eg dispatchers) ● Firefighters ● Those in NHS support services needed to keep hospitals and clinics running – eg hospital porters, full time hospital cleaners etc. Please explain when you complete your application ● School staff who are attending on site provision – eg looking after the children of critical workers themselves.
Level 2 – will be allocated a place when all placed are not used by Tier 1 parents/carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Other frontline NHS workers eg midwives, pathologists, CT scan operators, radiographers ● Local authority staff working in key emergency planning roles ● Those responsible for the management of the deceased ● Those medical staff involved in vaccinations ● School staff working from home who are supporting the Hitherfield Virtual School on their usual working days
Level 3 – key workers who may be needed if/when the crisis escalates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Those in other NHS/private care roles who will not be called upon to assist in coronavirus cases – eg care home staff, researchers, private pharmacists, OT, NHS administrators, other medical specialities ● Social workers ● Those involved in the supply chain for supermarkets and pharmacies (i.e. supermarket delivery drivers and those in supporting logistic roles) ● Those working for TfL in key transport roles ● Prison officers and some other prison staff and/or involved in judicial system ● Those working in care homes or in meals on wheels ● Community police officers

Level 4 – only able to offer a place if there are spaces left once other tiers have been accommodated

- Those involved in the water industry – delivery or maintenance
- ICT or telecoms workers in critical roles (please explain in email)
- Those employed in necessary Government processes such as the payment of benefits
- Probation service staff
- Those involved in fuel or gas deliveries or maintenance
- Transport and associated staff in support roles for transport services. In previous lockdowns most of these staff were able to change shifts to accommodate child care
- NHS medical students
- Those working in postal services and delivery
- Those working in waste disposal sectors



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