

Media Release

Date: 23 January 2021

Education settings closed to all but vulnerable students and children of essential workers

Schools, colleges and Early Years Providers (pre-schools, nurseries and child-minders) are to be closed with immediate effect, other than for vulnerable students and children of essential workers who will be able to attend their normal setting.

Children and Young people with special educational needs who usually attend SEND Schools will also be able to attend their schools, if parents wish to send them. This includes Le Rondin, Le Murier, Les Voies and the CIAS bases. Guernsey College of Further Education will be working with parents of students with special educational needs to ensure that they are supported appropriately.

All students of parents not defined as essential workers, or vulnerable students, will be required to stay at home.

For children to continue to attend school, college or early years during this period it is important to note that BOTH parents (unless single parent household) MUST be essential workers. The only exception is where one parent is a nurse, doctor, other key health or care worker, teaching staff, or staff essential to supporting the States of Guernsey's response to COVID-19, whose child(ren) will be able to attend school, college or early years even if the other parent does not fall into the essential worker category.

Please keep your children at home if you are able to do so and only send them into school/college if you fit into the clear essential worker category or if your child is a vulnerable learner. This will help our educational settings keep the numbers of children as low as possible in the days ahead.

Distance Learning will be re-introduced, having successfully operated last year, from Monday. Schools will be in touch with parents to provide relevant materials.

Staff in schools will be deployed on-site or to support Distance Learning remotely as necessary by their Head Teachers/Principals and according to the needs of the settings, unless they have received medical guidance telling them not to attend their normal workplace.

The following is a **list** of what are considered **essential workers**:

Private sector employers falling within the below categories should determine which roles are essential to the ability to maintain critical services. This list has been revised from the previous guidance and horticultural workers have been removed.

Workers **ESSENTIAL** to the functioning of any activity necessary to:

- Ensuring the continuing supply and accessibility of food and other essential goods including
 - Supermarkets and grocery stores
 - Air and sea freight transport
 - Stevedores and other necessary port management activities
 - Freight operators
- Ensure the continuing supply and accessibility of veterinary and animal health and husbandry services
- Ensuring continuing health and community care services including
 - GP surgeries/medical practices/dental practices
 - Opticians/audiologists
 - Pharmacies
 - Residential and nursing homes
 - Private and third sector agencies providing care services in a home or other setting (including the care of animals)
 - Volunteers that provide services to those in need (Meals on Wheels, Samaritans, etc)
 - Those responsible for management of the deceased or services celebrating, commemorating or otherwise recognising the life and/or death of a person.
- Those essential to the administration of justice
 - Advocates and staff
- Those providing private school services and daytime childcare
 - Private primary and secondary schools
 - Nurseries and day-care services
- Those maintaining critical national infrastructure (essential staff)
 - Utilities (water, electricity, gas, oil, post)
 - Telecoms providers (essential staff required to deliver mobile and fixed line telecommunication services)
- Those maintaining public transport
 - Bus operators and school transport providers
 - Taxis
- Public service broadcasters and other mainstream news media

- Banking services
 - Staff that are critical to providing branch-based services to enable cash and other financial transactions
 - Staff involved in maintaining critical economic infrastructure that requires on-site systems access
- Services that ensure the cleanliness and hygiene of working environments that can be undertaken while adhering to social distancing guidelines

Public service workers ESSENTIAL to the functioning of:

- Courts and Judicial Services
- Health and Social Care
- Education
- Emergency Services (Law Enforcement, Ambulance, Fire and Coastguard)
- Prison
- Law Officers
- States Works
- Guernsey Waste
- Ports
- Regulatory roles directly related to financial stability and banking supervision
- Treasury
- Social Security
- Animal welfare
- Ancillary staff from the private or public sectors who are essential to supporting the States of Guernsey's response to COVID-19, or civil servants or office holders specified by the Policy and Finance Committee of the States of Alderney, or the Policy and Finance Committee of the Chief Pleas of Sark, as the case may be.

School/College leaders will also invite students to attend if they have specific circumstances of need that the school/college is aware of (for example, looked-after children).

Deputy Andrea Dudley-Owen, President of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, said:

‘Our staff did a fantastic job last year, keeping sites open for vulnerable students and children of essential workers and with the provision of our distance learning offer. I know they will pull together to support our young people and their parents again.

‘Schools will contact parents with further information as soon as they are able to and we will keep the lines of communication open and active. I want to put on record my heartfelt thanks to the many dedicated education staff whose efforts cannot be underestimated as we seek to keep education sites open during this period for vulnerable students and children of essential workers.’