



DITCHHEAT PRIMARY SCHOOL
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COVID-19 Update – Critical Workers

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have finally received the guidance from the DFE that clarifies the status of Critical Workers. The guidance is clear, stating that the best place for all children to be is at home. Families with at least one 'Critical Worker' parent can request for their children to be at school from Monday, but this should **not be** used to enable a second parent/guardian to work in a non-key industry. The guidance states:

*Parents whose work is **critical** to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors. 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.***

- ***If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.***
- *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.*
- *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.*
- *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.*

The Critical Worker groups are as follows:

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.

We ask that if **one parent** is a critical worker, please contact the school by email, ditchheat@educ.somerset.gov.uk, as soon as possible detailing the below in your message:

- Category of work and job title for **both** parents
- Name/s and age group/s of your children
- Days you will require – children **should not** be in school every day, all day, if they do not need to be.

Please do this by 1pm today at the latest **even if you have already contacted me** to allow us to plan our provision for Monday. For all those families who are following the guidance and remaining at home, **we thank you**.

Best wishes

Victoria Withers

Headteacher