

Principal: Mr. Seamus Dorrian  
B.Ed., (Hons), P.S. Dip. Prof. Dev., M.Ed.

Email:  
info@stmaryskircubbin.newtownards.ni.sch.uk



3, Church Grove  
KIRCUBBIN  
Co. Down  
BT22 2SU

Tel: 028 427 38581  
Fax: 028 427 38037

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

### Ref: Supporting Children of Key Workers

As Principal I am acutely aware of the current crisis everyone is facing and will endeavour to do all in my power to help ensure the health and safety of the pupils and staff in our settings and wider communities. I am pastorally keen to support the Minister's request re the availability of childcare facilities for key workers in this crisis. However, this has been initiated with such haste, that we must consider carefully the potential implications of such an extensive list and ensure that appropriate steps are put in place to manage this request effectively.

It is worth bearing in mind that we have been instructed to close to minimise the risk of infection transfer at a time of national and global crisis. It is essential, therefore, that we are still able to comply with this ultimate reason for closure. Consequently, we will only be able to offer places for childcare based on capacity. To inform that decision, we need to be able to manage who can access the care, otherwise the original reason for closure of our schools and nurseries becomes meaningless. In practice, **this means we are not able to safely provide the offer of childcare from Monday morning**, but may need a few days to organise the provision, and ensure sufficient staffing and safeguarding measures. We may also need to consider offering places to a smaller group, where the need is most urgent.

Once key information has been gathered and decisions made, only families with an offer of a place should attend, and they should only do so when directed to by us. It could potentially be impossible to accept the number of families who may apply for such provision, given the extensive nature of the Minister's key worker list.

To support us and help us inevitably to support those most in need and yet still safeguard appropriately, we request that, if you request this provision, you contact the Principal with the information required in the form below. Before doing so, please consider the current guidance. Please be aware, guidance may alter later today if we receive more specific updates from the Education Minister.

**Please do not assume that we will be open as this will be dependent on availability of staff and provision being put in place by the Department of Education to ensure PHA regulations are met in the current crisis.**

Before contacting us, **please pay particular attention to the following points**. We will not be able to operate a 'normal' school day. **There will be no teaching**. We are already operating with a significant reduction in staffing and this will probably continue to get worse over time.



2017

Principal: Mr. Seamus Dorrian  
B.Ed. (Hons), P.S. Dip. Prof. Dev., M.Ed.

Email:  
info@stmaryskircubbin.newtownards.ni.sch.uk



3, Church Grove  
KIRCUBBIN  
Co. Down  
BT22 2SU

Tel: 028 427 38581  
Fax: 028 427 38037

### Points to consider:

A list of key workers, issued by the Department of Education is listed overleaf. Only children with **BOTH** **parents** working as key workers and **out at work at the same time** should consider requesting care. In single parent families, the individual parent **MUST** be a key worker.

If possible, alternative childcare arrangements should be sought before deciding to send your child. For example, with other family members, friends etc. Please try and use our care as a last resort.

**This is to try and limit the number of children and adults together in a small space in line with recent social distancing guidance.**

Children attending will be required to wear their uniform. They should **not** bring bags or books as this creates potential for cross contamination. Please be advised that we will be performing childcare duties, rather than teaching, as not all teachers are currently available to teach specific year groups and teachers must also be available to prepare online/remote learning.

We would ask that you pay attention to the points outlined above before requesting childcare. **To minimise the spread of the virus, it is essential that we keep the number of children and staff in our setting as low as possible. Therefore, please do not make this request unless it is a last resort.** Obviously, it goes without saying, if your only option is to request our care, we will look after them in order to support you in your important role.

These are challenging times and we greatly value the work that everyone is doing to limit the long term impact of this potentially devastating virus. This situation is continually developing and we will endeavour to keep you informed of any future changes as promptly as possible.

We keep you all in our thoughts and prayers.

Yours sincerely,

Seamus Dorrian  
Principal



educating mind ♥ heart ♥ spirit



Eco-Schools



2017

Principal: Mr. Seamus Dorrian  
B.Ed. (Hons), P.S. Dip. Prof. Dev., M.Ed.

Email:  
info@stmaryskircubbin.newtownards.ni.sch.uk



3, Church Grove  
KIRCUBBIN  
Co. Down  
BT22 2SU

Tel: 028 427 38581  
Fax: 028 427 38037

### Key Worker List as identified by the Education Minister:

1. Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector.
2. Education and childcare. This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response.
3. Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles.
4. Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response.
5. Utilities and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies, to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery services and waste disposal.
6. Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical etc.)
7. Other workers essential to delivering key public services.
8. Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.



2017

Principal: Mr. Seamus Dorrian  
B.Ed. (Hons), P.S. Dip. Prof. Dev., M.Ed.

Email:  
[info@stmaryskircubbin.newtownards.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stmaryskircubbin.newtownards.ni.sch.uk)



3, Church Grove  
KIRCUBBIN  
Co. Down  
BT22 2SU

Tel: 028 427 38581  
Fax: 028 427 38037

### APPLICATION FOR CHILDCARE SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN OF KEY WORKERS

Please email your response to [sdorrian255@c2kni.net](mailto:sdorrian255@c2kni.net) by 9:00 pm Friday 20th March, with the following information included:

**Children's Names:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY WORKER ROLES

Parent One – Name and Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Two – Name and Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternatively, please confirm your key worker role as a single parent – Name and Role:

\_\_\_\_\_

If possible, please note any particular considerations the school should be aware of if we are in a position where we need to manage who can access this offer of childcare support.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**We STRONGLY underline the fact that, given the timeframe, this provision will most likely not be in place for Monday 23rd March. Please provide us with up-to-date contact details, particularly if grandparents can no longer be listed as one of the priority contacts during this period.**

Contact Details: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



2017