

Giffards Primary School

Queen Elizabeth Drive Corringham Essex SS17 7TG

Headteacher
Telephone
Fax
Website

Mrs N Haslam-Davis
01375 672138
01375 677083
www.giffardsprimary.thurrock.sch.uk



‘Valuing Everyone As Learners’

10/1/2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

With the first week of the Spring Term under our belts 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 full online remote education to all our pupils at home. We have only been able to achieve this due to the tireless efforts of all the staff.

What is clear from this week, however, is that the number of pupils attending school under the critical worker provision is significantly higher than during the first lockdown. As a school we implemented the Government’s request to the letter, allowing pupils to attend if just one parent was a critical worker. We now find ourselves in the position where we need to ensure that we can accommodate those most in need whilst still running a full remote education and doing everything that we can to keep staff and pupils as safe as possible in school in light of recent Coronavirus developments and the high infection rates locally.

As I am sure you will understand, running a dual system of educating and supervising children in school whilst providing remote learning to those children at home places an additional and logistical staffing burden on the school as teachers are deployed to online teaching whilst staff are still required in the classrooms for those being educated in school. 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: pupils, parents and staff alike.

The guidance from the Department for Education has been updated in the last 48 hours reiterating that whilst children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker 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 finite, our internal risk assessment has identified a maximum number of pupils we can admit safely. We are now urging you to 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 that are actively helping to fight the pandemic. Many of our critical workers, particularly hospital and frontline medical staff, will be working additional hours and covering multiple shifts and we want to ensure that we prioritise those with the most urgent need.

Accordingly, 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 would like to remind parents that in line with the new DFE guidance children of critical workers should only attend school if it is not possible for them to remain at home (e.g. they

Giffards Primary School is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 8920008
The registered office is at Queen Elizabeth Drive, Corringham, Essex, SS17 7TG



should remain at home on a day when one or more parent is not working and therefore able to look after them as it is safer for all concerned) or another parent at home can safely look after them.

It is our desire to accommodate parents' needs as far as possible whilst keeping children and staff in school safe but, just like other schools, 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. We are still obliged to close a bubble if we have a positive case and this is far more likely to happen with high numbers of pupils.

Please take some time this weekend if you can 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@giffardsprimary.thurrock.sch.uk to enable us to plan for the weeks ahead.

Thank you in advance for your help and support in this matter.

Please follow the Government guidance on keeping safe

Yours sincerely

Mrs N Haslam-Davis
Headteacher

Giffards Primary School is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 8920008
The registered office is at Queen Elizabeth Drive, Corringham, Essex, SS17 7TG

