Email Sent 20/03/2020 13.56

We have been informed that the next Coronavirus Media briefing will be livestreaming from 3pm today.

We will be responding to this briefing as soon as possible with an email that will endeavour to cover all your questions and concerns. There is also a frequently asked questions document that is being prepared which will be shared once available.

Given the information you are requesting, it may be helpful to have a list ready that shows your children’s parent’s/carers’ occupations. During this time we will continue to support you throughout this and assist you with planning.

We will be in contact as soon as possible after the Media briefing that begins at 3pm.

Email Sent 20/03/2020 09.52

We are aware that there are a number of questions and concerns regarding the latest updates around the decision to enforce a temporary and partial closure of our schools, colleges and early years providers, which includes all preschools, day nurseries and childminders and what this means for you.

We appreciate everyone is working under exceptional circumstances, but we need to accept that we are required to make significant changes to the way we work at this time in order to support the infrastructure and health of our islands communities.

We will be in contact as soon as clarification around who qualifies as a key worker is received from the Strategic Co-ordinating Group.

Further information is being collated to answer all queries received, we appreciate your patience at this time and will be in contact as soon as we possibly can.
As you are all aware, we have been informed this afternoon of the decision to enforce a temporary and partial closure of our schools, colleges and early years providers, which includes all preschools, day nurseries and childminders.

Just to reiterate the message that was announced this afternoon by the Strategic Co-ordinating Group based on advice and evidence from Dr Nikki Brink (Director of Public Health) and her team who are reacting dynamically to these ever changing circumstances.

In order to continue to act and continue to ensure we manage the risks of this infection we will be taking additional social distancing measures. These will be temporary at this stage, enforced from Monday 23rd March and will include temporary and partial closures of schools, colleges and all day nurseries, preschools and childminders. This is enforceable, as the Civil Contingencies Authority has given power to the Director of Public Health to enforce these temporary and partial closures and they will be working with the Bailiwick Enforcement Officers to ensure this is complied with. Not complying with the restrictions or requirements imposed under these powers will be an offence.

Schools, colleges, preschools, day nurseries and childminders will only remain open for children whose parents/guardians are key workers. These measures will provide extra “brakes” to slow down transmission of the virus and prevent our healthcare system from being overwhelmed.

It is important that all day nurseries, preschools and childminders remain open, where possible, for children whose parents are classed as key workers. Confirmation of who will be classed as a key worker will follow tomorrow.

All staff working from Monday 23rd March in our preschools, day nurseries or as a childminder are classed as key workers themselves and therefore if you have children, they will be able to continue to attend school, preschools, day nurseries or a childminder.

If you are opening to support our key workers and you find your ratios and staffing are becoming critical please contact us so we can help support you to remain open. You must let us know if your staffing becomes critical or if you are a childminder yourself, become unwell and are unable to childmind. Please use the form attached and send to SEYT@education.gg by 6pm for the next day or as soon as possible and we will endeavour to support you.

We appreciate that the sector and other private businesses across the Bailiwick are being affected by the impact of the COVID-19/Coronavirus public health crisis. The States of Guernsey Policy & Resource Committee are setting out packages of financial support of which details can be found here: https://gov.gg/article/176828/Financial-measures-to-support-the-Guernsey-economy A ‘Coronavirus Support for your Business’ guide is attached for your information.

The Preschool Education Funding (PSEF) will remain in place during this time

It is vitally important that should you remain open to support our key workers you continue to meet the EYQSF and safeguard our children during this unprecedented time.

All schools were sent the attached ‘Enhanced Measures for Schools’ documents earlier today, which explains the enhanced measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19/Coronavirus.

We thank you again for your continued professionalism and hard work at this time.

Please be assured that we will contact you tomorrow with any additional information, including the definition of a key worker.
Following on from the live press conference regarding the unfolding developments in managing the COVID-19/Coronavirus and the news of the enforced temporary closure of schools, colleges and early years providers, with the exception of SEND provision and for the childcare of children of key workers, we would like to assure you we are working closely with various teams within the States of Guernsey to be able to give you details of what this will mean for our sector during this temporary closure.

We continue to appreciate your professionalism at this time and will contact you with further details as soon as these are collated. We appreciate your patience at this time.
The message below has been issued to you from Paul Whitfield, States of Guernsey Chief Executive and to our colleagues in schools and post 16. It is being shared to acknowledge his gratitude for your professionalism and hard work at this time. Whilst the references are to our schools the essence of the message is applicable to our sector too. Any further direction for schools, shared by Public Health Services, to advise us of steps that must be taken to minimise contact within the our environments, will be shared and reviewed by our team for you tomorrow, to ensure they apply to our sector.

Please see below a message from Paul Whitfield, to all staff who work in schools, post-16 and early years.

Dear colleagues

I want to thank you all for your continued commitment in supporting efforts to keep our schools open and continuing to focus on the needs of all students. Educating our young people and keeping schools open is a key priority for the island at the moment. It supports other key workers, such as hospital staff, police officers and ports staff who keep our vital supply lines open, and enables much of island life to maintain a degree of normality in what are very abnormal times.

As you will all be aware, there is a rapidly changing international and national picture as a result of coronavirus/COVID-19. In turn this is having a significant impact on the Bailiwick. As we are a small island community, our response is and must be different to other jurisdictions.

The response to coronavirus has been and must continue to be a whole island response. Dr Nikki Brink, Director of Public Health, has advised of the importance of this.

Within this whole-island context, any decision to close schools prematurely could have significant implications:

- In many cases students would be looked after by their grandparents while parents and carers are at work, and the over 65s are our most vulnerable group.
- At a recent meeting, nurses were asked how many of them would have to withdraw from their duties if schools closed and the answer was around 50%.
- Modelling by Public Health shows that schools could be shut for many months if we closed them now.
- Impact young peoples’ learning and particularly those at key stages in their school life.

While we cannot underestimate the impact of such decisions, the safety of our children and school staff is of paramount importance. As such further direction, led by Public Health Services, will shortly be issued to all headteachers about steps that must be taken to minimise contact within the school environment. At the moment, the focus in schools must be on the delivery of lessons only rather than the wider school community activity. We will of course share with you the further steps that will be taken to protect staff and students as soon as they are finalised.
We are absolutely not ruling out the possibility that schools may have to close at some stage, however we have to strike the right balance for the island as a whole. I want to thank you again for your professionalism and I also want you to know that your contributions are highly valued. You should not underestimate the significant positive impact that you are having for the Bailiwick during what are challenging times for our whole community.

Many thanks

Paul

Paul Whitfield
Chief Executive
States of Guernsey

I am working with various senior civil servants at this time to ensure we have a clear picture as to what school closures would mean for our sector. This includes how we can support the sector from a business perspective during this time and these will be shared as soon as they are available.

Earlier today Deputy St. Pier issued a statement which outlined some financial measures to support the Guernsey economy, the media release can be found here https://gov.gg/article/176828/Financial-measures-to-support-the-Guernsey-economy. Further details about how this effects our sector will be shared as soon as they are available.

Statement from Deputy St Pier and Deputy Soulsby from yesterday's press conference (17th March) can be found using this link https://gov.gg/covid19resources

Once again may I thank you for your continual professionalism and hard work, I know you appreciate the pace at which information is rapidly changing and I along with the team will continue to work hard to keep you supported and ensure you are receiving up to date information and are included in communications.
Public Health (PH) have updated their advice around mandatory self-isolation for all people arriving onto the islands, enforced from 00:01 on Thursday 19th March – see media release attached, which include emergency enforcement powers.

We continue to follow advice and guidance at [https://www.gov.gg/coronavirus](https://www.gov.gg/coronavirus) and please continue to follow their advice and be reminded that;

‘Two dedicated helpline numbers have been released today for Islanders to use if they have **any clinical questions** regarding the coronavirus. The numbers are: 01481 756938 and 01481 756969

These two numbers will be manned between **8am and 10pm** every day and are being manned by trained call handlers from the Joint Emergency Services Call Centre (JESCC).

Any non-clinical questions that are not answered on this page should be emailed to publichealth@gov.gg’

We appreciate the current circumstances are unprecedented and we want to reassure you we are working with services to ensure you have access to the most up to date information and support to inform your decisions and management at this time.

In addition to continuing to follow guidance from PH, if your ratios and staffing become critical please contact the States Early Years Team (268313) for support and advice in order to ensure the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained.

If you have members of staff with Qualified Teacher Status then as in the UK ratio’s for children 3 years old and older the following will be permitted:

   · there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children

Any planned inspections will be suspended until further notice, we will continue to have the ability to carry out unannounced visits should there be a reason to do so (e.g. safeguarding concerns or significant complaint received) as per our regulatory requirements set out in the Children Law (2008) and Child Protection Law (1972). ECERS audits and SER support visits will be discussed with individual providers and a mutual decision will be made as to whether these go ahead. During this time we will continue to work with you to offer support and advice as required.

I am also in contact with the Business Continuity Group within the States of Guernsey who are looking at ways to support businesses at this time and continue to inform them of the unique and essential sector you provide to our islands. I will share any information as soon as I am able to.

Thank you for your continued hard work and professionalism at this time.
Email Sent 16/03/2020 09:26

Update Coronavirus/COVID-19 - The advice remains as it was on Friday when you were sent the attached email with the further guidance and restrictions around travel.

All updated travel information can be found here https://www.gov.gg/covid19travel. If staff notice that a child becomes unwell with any of the following symptoms (cough, sore throat, running or blocked nose, muscle pain or fatigue or a fever) you should contact their parents to discuss.

If you believe this is a recently developed symptom, in line with Public Health advice on www.gov.gg/coronavirus, than the child should go home and self-isolate until the symptoms have disappeared plus an additional 48 hours.

This remains the advice for staff too, with again the distinction being a recently developed symptom.

Please also continue to ensure staff are aware of the latest advice and the importance of everyone reassuring children and parents of it.

As part of Le Rondin School and Centre’s risk management of Covid-19 we have been looking at the Business contingency plan. The purpose of this plan is to minimise any risks to the children, families and staff using the centre and what to do if there are any confirmed cases of covid-19.

Le Rondin School and Centre has offices, training rooms and meeting rooms upstairs (referred to as the ‘Centre’), however, we share an entrance with the children and staff from the school. Some of these children are particularly vulnerable in these circumstances. Please, therefore, ensure you adhere to the Public Health guidance of hand washing and hygiene before you come into the centre and only come into the centre if you are required to and are not displaying symptoms as outlined by Public Health advice. If you can communicate via email or telephone please do so. All training booked in is currently still going ahead, unless we are advised otherwise and we will contact all individuals if this is the case and let them know.

If there are to be any closures either of the school and not the Centre or both the school and the Centre we will let you know, including contact numbers should the Centre be closed.

We will contact you with further guidance as the situation develops.

For further information from Public Health, please go to https://www.gov.gg/coronavirus

Many thanks
Following on from our email yesterday regarding the Coronavirus/COVID-19 update, please see the recent Public Health Services new guidance issued late yesterday afternoon which could be sent to parents:

As some of you may have seen, Public Health Services issued new guidance late yesterday afternoon around when people should self-isolate. The advice from Public Health is now that, as an extra layer of caution to protect our community, anyone who becomes unwell with the following symptoms (cough, sore throat, running or blocked nose, muscle pain or fatigue or a fever) should stay at home and self-isolate until the symptoms have disappeared plus an additional 48 hours.

If your child BECOMES unwell with any of these symptoms, please follow the latest advice and keep them at home.

Please note that should your child become unwell they would not need to be tested for coronavirus/COVID-19 unless they have recently travelled to a Group A or B country (you can find these here www.gov.gg/coronavirus).

This new advice from Public Health Services represents good infection prevention control at any time, but is particularly important while the Island is working to contain the spread of COVID-19. Evidence proves that this advice could reduce the potential spread of respiratory illness by 60%.

Should you/staff notice that a child has become unwell with any of these symptoms, we will contact you in the first instance to discuss and they may be required to come home.

Please can you reprioritise your daily schedule wherever possible to allow time to clean down high contact surfaces in social areas and toilets. This can be done with the products you use daily. Please ensure you cover all areas that children and staff touch regularly (door knobs, taps, reception front desk, hand rails etc.).

Also attached is the latest version of advice that has been sent to schools from Public Health Services, please familiarise yourself with the contents but as it could be constantly updated for future use please ensure you have looked at the latest version available at https://www.gov.gg/coronavirus.

The States Early Years Team would ask you to use your professional judgement and holistic knowledge of your children and continue to be vigilant with hand washing and cleaning. We appreciate this is a difficult time for all families and staff teams, but please follow guidance from the World Health Organisation and our Director of Public Health who are updating information as it comes through.

As a private business please check your own policies and guidance for parents and ensure you refer to current medical advice to ensure they align and share any updates with parents. If a parent/carer chooses to take their child out of your provision when they have not become ill with any of the symptoms as advised, then depending on the contract you have in place, they may still be required to continue to pay. It would be advisable to check your contracts. As a private business it is your decision to make, but please ensure you are following the Public Health guidance to help make an informed decision.

Providers who offer the Preschool Education Funding will continue to be paid as you continue to follow the advice from Public Health.
It is also essential that we continue to keep our children and staff safe and we must therefore ensure at this time we continue to work within ratios, this may mean you are required to move staff as necessary.

Please feel free to share this information with parents/carers.
Given the heightened awareness about coronavirus/COVID-19 both globally and locally following the island’s first confirmed case this week, as the Early Years Sector we should prepare ourselves for the likelihood that there will be times in the days and weeks ahead when children or staff are sent home as a precaution and on the advice of Public Health Services.

We have already seen a few such instances across our schools and it is really important that we are aware of the most up-to-date advice and avoid causing unnecessary distress through speculation.

Please be assured that if a child experiences relevant symptoms (fever, cough or shortness of breath) we will speak to Public Health Services and take their advice on any actions needed. It is vital that we remain calm and take proportionate steps to support the efforts of Public Health Services. Given the time of year, anyone experiencing symptoms could be suffering from flu or another illness so it is important not to jump to conclusions.

We will of course contact you straight away if there are any material changes to circumstances. However, please note that we are unlikely to contact all parents if a child experiences symptoms and is sent home as a precaution. As we are expecting that this may well occur in the coming days or weeks, we wanted to write to you all now so that as the Early Years Sector we are all on the same page regarding both the advice we should all listen to and the expectation that there are likely to be times when children are sent home as a precaution on the advice of Public Health.

At this stage there is no need for any further action, there are no plans to close early years providers and there is no need to keep children away from early years settings.

I would encourage everyone to read up on the latest advice which can be found at [www.gov.gg/coronavirus](http://www.gov.gg/coronavirus).

In terms of general advice; should anyone experience any of the three symptoms (fever, cough or shortness of breath) and have the relevant travel history (see [www.gov.gg/coronavirus](http://www.gov.gg/coronavirus)), they should contact the coronavirus helpline for advice. There are two numbers to call, but please only use these when clinical advice is needed. They are 756938 or 756969.