

Catalyst Academies approach to the allocation of places for pupil of Critical Workers and online learning

The Trust issued a letter on Thursday 31st December 2020, outlining the Critical Worker provision that our Trust schools were proposing to offer, with a link for those who feel that they are eligible to apply. This was in response to the Contingency Arrangements that were being put into place locally before the [Prime Minister's announcement on 4 January 2021](#), only children of critical workers and vulnerable children and young people should attend school or college. All other pupils and students will receive remote education.

Critical worker places are allocated on a first come first served basis after the school have checked Critical Worker evidence that was supplied by the employee or their employer. Once schools have filled their allocation additional applications will still be accepted and if successful put onto a waiting list.

Families of children who have been identified by school as being vulnerable will be contacted by the school to see how we can best support each individual.

Inline with our risk assessment and information received from Thurrock Council on 31st December 2020 successful applicants who wish to accept the place for their child(ren) are required to take Covid PCR test. This is in order to reduce the likelihood of new outbreaks in our schools at the start of the spring term, any returning pupils and their families should get tested before their child attends school. Tests can be booked by calling 119 via the government website using the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. The website also allows tests to be ordered by post as an alternative to driving to one of the drive through testing centres. Alternatively, test kits can be collected from the Stanley Lazell Hall, 21-23 Dell Rd, Grays RM17 5JP

Our highest priority is to safeguard our own staff, and all pupils within our school community. Unfortunately we have also been affected by the impact of the coronavirus on our staff and critical workers. Taking all of these measures into account, whilst supporting the Government's strategy to temporarily apply the contingency arrangements locally in deliver lessons online in an attempt stop the spread of Coronavirus, whilst keeping nursery classes open and reducing the risk to, and burden, on the limited number of staff that are available to cater for these pupils, the Trust are only able to offer critical worker provision to families where both parents are key workers and have no alternative provision.

To maintain a high quality, purposeful learning offer recommended by the Department for Education each teacher will be assisted by another adult who will be monitoring chat, assisting pupils, creating resources, checking pupil submissions and taking registers. All remaining staff including senior leadership will be responsible for the monitoring of pupils in the Critical worker classes. Due to the fact that there are very few staff available after online roles had been allocated we had to limit numbers to 36 in each school and they will be placed in bubbles of 10-15 based on age. If a school is oversubscribed applications will be reviewed on a case by case basis and a place may be offered if the school has capacity to do so.

Catalyst Academies Trust leaders feel passionately that pupils should wherever possible receive the full curriculum entitlement whilst online which will be followed by reception to year 6 children including those of Critical worker pupils whilst in school which includes:

- Video interaction with pupils, Teacher and assistant every school day so that everyone fully understands what is happening throughout the day
- Daily registers
- Daily live lessons so that pupils can interact and see their peers
- Online tasks set so that pupils can complete independently
- Materials put online so that any learning missed can be reviewed and completed outside school hours

Those that do not have access to equipment can ask their school for support. This can include:

- The school lending pupils devices to use whilst at home
- The use of a limited number of Data Sims (subject to availability)
- Materials put online so that any learning missed can be reviewed and completed outside school hours

On the rare occasion that pupils have no access to digital resources or pupils have difficulty using equipment parents can request paper packs for pupils to use at home

Who are vulnerable children and young people?

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

Who are Critical Workers?

Critical workers are defined as parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections.

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:

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals who must remain active during the coronavirus (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
- 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) response, and the delivery of and response to EU transition
- essential public services, such as the payment of benefits and the certification or checking of goods for import and export (including animal products, animals, plants and food), 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and EU transition)
- 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 and border

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response and EU transition, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass and those constructing or supporting the operation of critical transport and border infrastructure 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 coronavirus (COVID-19) response
- 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
- waste disposal sectors