**Urgent appeal from the Education Authority**

EA Mail

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7 April 2020

**For the attention of all school principals, from the Director of Education**

Dear Colleague,

**An appeal for assistance: supporting the provision of supervised care for children of key workers, Easter 2020**

We recognise the tremendous contribution of schools over recent weeks, in providing opportunities to support the continued learning of pupils, in the midst of the Covid-19 crisis.  We acknowledge the efforts of teaching and non-teaching staff in supporting pupils remotely both academically and pastorally during this challenging period.  We take this opportunity to thank you for your continued dedication and commitment.

As you will know, it has been predicted that the Easter holiday period will coincide with the peak of the COVID-19 virus. We are grateful to the many schools which have indicated a willingness to remain open over the holiday period to provide supervised care for the children of key workers: those who are serving their communities ‘on the frontline’ throughout this crisis.

However, we are concerned that illness and other factors may give rise to a shortage of the teaching and non-teaching staff who are essential to ensuring that this supervised care provision is maintained across all key locations, throughout the Easter holiday period.

Accordingly, we are appealing to all teaching and non-teaching staff, **who are not already  involved in providing supervised care in their own school or in a cluster school over the Easter period**, to register their interest in helping to maintain provision. This appeal is going out to all schools and to staff working in education support organisations, including the Education Authority. We are asking all these staff to indicate their willingness to work in locations other than their usual place of work, in order to support the care of key workers’ children over the holiday period. It is hoped that if people can offer even one or two days of assistance, supervised care for these children can be sustained and their parents can continue to provide essential services.

**Please note that this appeal is separate to the appeals for ‘volunteers’ which have been issued by the Minister of Education. Those who have registered their availability and interest with DE may be required at a later stage. This appeal from the EA relates particularly to provision over the Easter holiday period and requires a separate registration response.**

Please note that, to comply with the government’s current ‘Stay at Home’ rules, people may only carry out those tasks which involve leaving their home, including work such as this, if they fulfil **ALL** of the conditions below:

·         You are well and have no symptoms like a cough or high temperature and neither does anybody in your household;

·         You are under 70;

·         You are not pregnant; and

·         You do not have any long-term health conditions that make you vulnerable to coronavirus.

**The following groups of staff may be required to ensure continuity of provision over Easter:**

**To lead and manage provision at local level:** Principals, Vice Principals, Senior Leaders

**To provide supervised care for children:** teachers, classroom assistants

**To ensure clean and safe premises:** building supervisors, cleaners

**To provide administrative support:** school secretaries, other administrative staff

Please note that staff who, in response to this appeal, are deployed to work hours which are above and beyond those set out in their Terms and Conditions of Employment (including weekends and Public Holidays) will be remunerated at the appropriate level. The EA will provide further advice and guidance to school principals on the mechanisms for administering this.

To register your interest and availability, please complete the registration form available through the following link, which will submit your details to EA:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqN5d_9N4BoVBq1iaUR9JMrFUM1NDN1FWOE5EOVZINlhJQ09LMThMTktKQy4u>

This appeal and the embedded registration link has been emailed to all principals and teachers.

However, as the EA does not hold email addresses for non-teaching staff, we would greatly value your assistance in making these colleagues aware of the appeal for support and in providing them with the weblink for registration. Please feel free to pass on this email to any such staff, if that is possible.

Thank you for your on-going support and co-operation at this time – it is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Michele Corkey

**Michele Corkey |** Director of Education

Education



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