

Dear all

Following the Prime Ministers statement yesterday on school closures, I am now implementing phase 2 of my emergency management plan. Again your managers have all been fully briefed, and will be contacting you to discuss and answer any questions you may have.

The second phase of the plan is to **manage staff shortages**. The following is effective from 9am tomorrow and until further notice:

- We move to a priority family system. This means we will continue home visits for Priority A and B families. Priority C families will move to telephone/skype contact. Your managers have already mapped families into priority groups, and will discuss each of your families with you
- We continue to accept new referrals, each of which will be prioritised, but will monitor this closely once we know the full implications of school closures. It is possible we may be included on the governments key worker list. If we are, our children would be eligible to continue to attend school and nursery. This decision affects our capacity into next week. We expect an announcement from Treasury on key workers later today.
- We will not accept any new bespoke work from social care until further notice, but will continue with existing bespoke work
- I want to be clear what my expectation is of the work and our job during this crisis. Families are living through extraordinary circumstances and the networks on which we depend to support our work with families are severely depleted. Therefore we must have realistic expectations of ourselves and our families. The focus of family work right now is on a) practical support on basic needs including food, shelter, medicines, safety, benefits b)emotional support as needed c)maintaining the relationship and d)preventing crisis wherever possible. We will be led by the individual needs of each family and continue with Resilient Families principles

I am now taking steps to try and increase our staffing capacity. This will include exploring availability of other Council staff who will be unable to do their work once schools, childrens centres, youth clubs and nurseries shut. I will consider use of agency staff once the school closure position is clear.

Can I also urge those of you who live with elderly relatives, or with family members with health conditions in the high risk category, to continue to observe guidance from NHS and Public Health England. Can we also make sure we are sticking to lone working procedures, especially regarding doing initial home visits in pairs.

As soon as I get any further information about school closures, and whether we are designated key workers, I will let you know. I know this is incredibly unsettling, especially when things change day to day with new central government announcements that have a huge impact on our personal and professional lives. I will prepare us for what is to come as much as I possibly can.

Thank you for keeping going and I am, as always, here for you.

Becca

Becca Dove
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