**Sion Mills Primary School Supporting Children of Key Workers in Schools**

To clarify the Minister of Education’s statement that schools will close today for all normal operations but remain open from Monday 23rd March. This opening will be for staff in order to facilitate distance learning and to the children of key workers. Sion Mills P.S. will do all we can to fulfil this as we move forward. We are mindful of our duty to do what we can to support the system and enable vital services to continue.

**List of Key Workers:**

**Health and Social Care**. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector.

• **Education and childcare**. This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response.

• **Public Safety and national security**. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, Prison Service and other national security roles.

• **Transport**. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response.

• **Utilities and Communication**. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, services and waste disposal.

• **Food and other necessary goods**. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g hygiene, medical etc).

• **Other workers essential to delivering key public services**

• **Key national and local government** including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.

However, in line with **Public Health Agency advice on social distancing** the following will be taken into consideration.

**Key worker parents requiring care provision:**

Many parents working in the identified key workers list **may** be able to ensure that their child is kept at home.

**EVERY CHILD WHO CAN BE SAFELY CARED FOR AT HOME SHOULD BE.**

There is no requirement for identified key worker parents to take up this offer or send their children to school if they do not wish to.

Any children previously withdrawn from school on the basis of risk should not return.

**Only children with BOTH parents working as Key Workers and only when both parents are working AT THE SAME TIME should their children attend school.**

In single parent families, the main carer **MUST** be a Key Worker and be required at work.

Every alternative childcare arrangement should be explored before deciding to send children to school. School should, in effect, be a **LAST RESORT**. This is to try to limit the number of children in school together.

Children attending will be required to wear their school uniform. Children attending will not be accessing teaching, simply child supervision. We are advised under public health concerns that they may not bring their schoolbags or work packs into school.

School lunch will be available for anyone in school.

Please note that Free School Meals provision for other children is yet to be determined.

A small number of parents have contacted the school today, others may contact me by email, on omcnelis240@c2kni.net

***The above arrangements may be subject to change as the week ahead unfolds.***

**We wish our school community comfort and blessings.**