

**Director for Schools and Learning - update**

I hope your staff and pupils are both safe and well during these very difficult times.

Thank you for everything which you have done so far in continuing to meet the needs of your pupils and students. You are serving the county's young people and having to balance this with the availability of your staff whilst also trying to interpret government guidance.

Yesterday's announcement by the Prime Minister provides a new dimension to how we will all be living our lives and working over the forthcoming weeks, and the Department for Education has already announced that the position with regards to vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers being able to attend school remains the same. As we move through this crisis, the advice slowly becomes clearer and the document titled 'Guidance for schools about temporarily closing (22 March 2020)' is a useful guide. A link to the document is shown below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing>

In addition, please keep updating the government's attendance portal on a daily basis and we will receive feeds from this about schools which remain open.

The issue of free school meals is also a very live one. An update is available [here](#) on SchoolsNet about how this can be best administered.

We know you have looked at all possibilities about keeping your school open to the identified groups of young people and today we have also written to parents and carers. This letter is in the council's [main website](#) and we would appreciate you also bringing this to the attention of your parents and carers as part of your continued updates.

These are unprecedented times, but by working together we can help all of our children and young people safe and save lives.

Derbyshire County Council continues to work with transport providers for home to school transport and we know that some transport may not be required as it currently is.

We would appreciate schools liaising directly with the council's transport teams to provide more information about whether the current school transport requirements (bus, mini bus and taxis) are still needed.

Iain Peel | Service Director for Schools and Learning |