

**Derek Baker**  
**Permanent Secretary**



To all school principals and staff

Rathgael House  
43 Balloo Road  
Rathgill  
BANGOR  
BT19 7PR

22 March 2020

Dear School Principal and education staff,

**COVID-19 – REQUEST NUMBER 1 FOR INDICATIVE INFORMATION  
REGARDING SCHOOL OPENING FOR KEY WORKERS ON MONDAY 23  
MARCH 2020**

As part of our collective effort to try to combat the overwhelming threat of COVID-19 and following last week's decision to support key workers' children within educational settings, I am writing to ask you for some important and necessary high-level information.

Given the urgent context we're all operating in, my officials would appreciate a response as early as possible and therefore I would ask for **your response by 6pm this evening**.

This first letter commissions the first of 2 data capture exercises to help us plan for the coming days and weeks.

The attached survey <https://bit.ly/2UmLyV2> asks some short questions regarding whether or not you intend to open your school to children of key workers on Monday 23 March 2020. It asks you to identify:

- Whether you intend to open tomorrow, Monday 23 March;
- Whether you intend to stay open in the days / weeks ahead until requested otherwise;
- Whether you are willing to accept children and staff from other schools if needed

This will provide DE, the NI Executive and Westminster with important information in terms of the extent to which schools are able to meet the considerable demands being asked of them.

The second data request, which will initiate on Monday 23 March, will be a daily request regarding pupil attendance and information on staffing levels. It has been designed to be straightforward and should take no more than a few minutes to complete each day.

May I take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your on-going dedication and support in trying to combat this unprecedented and serious threat we are all facing. It is greatly appreciated by me and wider society.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D A Baker". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

**DEREK BAKER  
PERMANENT SECRETARY**