



20<sup>th</sup> March, 2020

Dear all

Things as you know are moving very quickly and we are trying to make sure we are covering as much as we can and then supporting you to undertake your work as safely as possible.

The first thing I wanted to say is thank you to everyone, I know how hard you are all working to keep the service going at every level of the organisation. I want you to know I truly appreciate your commitment and 'can do' attitude.

The Prime Minister has announced that all schools, nurseries and colleges will close on Friday evening. They are however, saying that vulnerable children and children of key workers will be supported. At this point the detail of vulnerable children and key worker has yet to be presented but we are aware that social workers and social care staff will be included. As information becomes available we will be cascading as quickly as possible.

There have been several requests to clarify how we are managing work and keeping the services running. I have described our expectations of staff below:

**Off work due to sickness** – you must, as is the norm, inform your manager if you are not fit for work and the normal sickness absence protocol.

**Social isolating** – please inform your line manager. We have taken this to mean you are able to undertake your work but will not be in a position to leave your home for

14 days or 7 if living alone. You will be expected to undertake tasks such as holding meetings by Skype or phone, updating cases and finding ways to remain in contact with families and other professionals.

**Socially distancing** – please inform your manager. You will be expected to work as described in social isolation but you will be in a position to leave your home and undertake visits or support family time. You will continue to undertake meetings etc although this may remotely.

**Working from home** – working from home is with agreement from your manager.

To make visits as safe as possible you may have to use different ways of working and every visit should be undertaken following a telephone call to ensure no-one is displaying symptoms of Covid-19. You may have to consider face-timing families or other ways of being visually able to see children. If you have ideas of how to do this please let me know.

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Family time will be supported for as long as we can safely do so. Again we may have to think creatively how we do this. We have discussed with CAFCAS that we may not be able to undertake the amount directed by courts. A meeting with the president is taking place this evening and we will have more court information by the end of the week. At the moment all legal meetings will be remotely managed.

I have spoken to health and all CP medial and strategy meetings will be business as usual, if there are any changes to this we will let you know.

I need your help in several areas:

- (a) It is likely that the appropriate adult service may cease and I may need volunteers to undertake the role, if you would be in a position to support please let Barbara Bath know.
- (b) Our care leavers are struggling and need food and toiletries if you could donate anything we will start donation boxes in the localities.

I will send an update when we have anything to report.

I just wanted to mention that your managers are working hard to make sure they are supporting you to remain well and safe.

As always please let me know if there is anything else you think we should be doing.

