

Dear Parent / Carer

As you will be aware, the Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in Welsh Government being required to make rapid decisions and changing the way in which schools operate, and as a local authority, we are ensuring we follow national guidance.

Over the last two weeks, all schools across the Vale of Glamorgan have provided childcare for children of key workers from their own schools. This has been the preferred model of the local authority and schools and I suspect parents and carers too, but we now realise this is not sustainable. As the Coronavirus progresses, many schools will struggle to staff a childcare provision due to staff sickness and self-isolation. So, in working with a group of headteachers, we have now decided to move towards a hub model in line with other local authorities across Wales.

Whilst the number of sites offering the provision is fewer, the hub model is based on local school clusters working together to deliver the childcare provision for their area. This will enable them to redeploy and rota teaching and support staff to keep the hubs open for a sustained period, and provide the best possible quality of provision given the circumstances.

14 hubs will be available across the Vale of Glamorgan, made up of schools that are geographically as close as possible to each other. With 14 hubs, this will mean that the number of pupils attending will remain relatively low to ensure we are able to maintain safe social distancing measures. All hubs will provide childcare for households where both parents/carers are key workers or for single family households where the parent/carer is a keyworker. Childcare provision for these families will operate from 7am to 7pm, 7 days a week, and will provide breakfast, lunching and an evening snack to all children. A centrally operated admissions process for parents who are key workers will be introduced and children will be allocated to an appropriate hub. Details of this will be made available on the Vale of Glamorgan website www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.

It remains the case that the hub childcare provision should only be used as a **last resort** where all other options have been exhausted by parents and carers, and wherever possible, children and young people should remain in the safety of their own homes. The wellbeing and safety of both staff and pupils is absolutely paramount in all our thinking.

We understand that this is a very challenging and unsettling time for you and your children and wish to assure you that as an authority, we are doing everything possible to support the national effort against the COVID-19 virus.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paula Ham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paula" being more prominent than the last name "Ham".

Paula Ham
Director of Learning and Skills