

Date: 08-06-2020  
Your Ref: N/A



**Early Years Education and Childcare settings.**

**People Services**

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Dear Early Years Education and Childcare Owner/ Managers,

**Re: Extension to operating times following the R rate increase**

Please find a statement prepared by Councillor Galloway lead member for Children's Services and supported by Dr Helen Lowey, Director of Public Health and Bernie Brown Director of People.

We hope this provides you with assurances that you will be supported in the decisions you make as Owner/ Managers about your individual setting supported by your risk assessments.

A recorded Webinar from Public Health will be available from the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020, further details will be emailed out and a Public Health data pack will be released to support the Webinar.

We do hope this will help you make the right decisions for your provision, prioritising the safety of staff and pupils at this very difficult and worrying time. The statement below refers to schools and Headteachers but applies to Early Years Education and Childcare settings.

Statement reads:

"We remain committed to supporting headteachers and governing bodies as they put plans in place and make decisions on what is best for their individual school communities.

"Discussions with schools and unions have continually been taking place throughout lockdown.

"The 'R' number is just one of the Government's considerations when easing lockdown measures.

Director of People Bernie Brown

“R’ values are not published for local areas as they are not robust at this level. However, the council is using a range of measures to monitor COVID-19 in Bolton including numbers of confirmed case and admissions to hospital.

“Decisions on extending opening of schools are based on a number of considerations including the risk assessments undertaken by schools as part of their preparations to re-open.

“From the beginning of lockdown, schools remained open for a number of vulnerable and key worker’s children.

“During this time, schools were able to put in place a range of interventions and measures so that children and staff could socially distance, ensure good hand hygiene and adhere to guidance whilst within a teaching environment.

“Positive feedback has shown that the plans put in place for these children were robust. “Where schools are confident that they can operate safely in welcoming more pupils in Reception, Years One and Six, then they will be supported.

“We will respect headteachers who feel confident they can operate safely while increasing numbers, but equally respect those heads who feel they can’t.

“Safety of staff and children and the wider community remain our top priority. We will continue to monitor the situation, both locally and nationally, and keep in regular contact with all schools.”

Can we once again thank you for your leadership at this time and the incredible work of your teams in supporting children access opportunities to return to their Early Years Education and Childcare settings in the most difficult and challenging of circumstances,

Yours Sincerely



**Bernie Brown**  
**Director of People Services**

**Councillor Anne Galloway**  
**Executive Member Children’s**



**Dr Helen Lowey**  
**Director Public Health**

Director of People Bernie Brown