

Friday, 20 March, 2020

Supporting families during school closures

Jersey's Children's Minister is bringing forward the launch of the Children and Families Hub to provide the right help at the right time for children, young people and families requiring additional support.

This new service will open on Monday as the majority of Government of Jersey schools and colleges close to support efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19.

In a statement, Children's Minister, Senator Sam Mézec, said: "From Monday, 15,000 children who would normally be at school will be at home social distancing in our attempts to protect people most vulnerable to the Coronavirus pandemic.

"As a result, we have accelerated the planned launch of a new Children and Families Hub that will open from Monday, 23 March 2020.

"This is an opportunity to strengthen effective co-ordination of services across Government and the community and voluntary sector and for us to realise our long-term ambition to provide the Right Help at the Right Time."

The Children and Families Hub will provide a single point of referral for children, young people and families who require additional support and ensure children are appropriately safeguarded and protected.

Senator Mézec added: "Families will need our support and we need the public to be our eyes and ears in the community as children and families go into isolation and experience social distancing.

"Some children will be more vulnerable during this period and it is imperative that we do all we can together to ensure these children are safe from harm and abuse.

"We have issued new advice for families on a new webpage on gov.je, which offers tips to parents on how to talk to their children about coronavirus, as well as advising parents to think about the arrangements they are making for their children and what would support them during the school closures.

"It is important that parents make the right arrangements for their children to remain in good physical and mental health. Parents and carers are responsible for keeping their children safe.

"We will also launch an online Right Help Right Time directory with information and on-line resources for families.

"And within the next week, we will be offering a Parenting Advice Line and on-line resources to support parents during this challenging period."

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. For further information, please contact the press office on 01534 440430 or pressoffice@gov.je