



Sandal Castle (VA) Community Primary School  
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[www.sandalcastleprimary.co.uk](http://www.sandalcastleprimary.co.uk)

29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

### Prime Minister's statement on the national lockdown position

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January, the Prime Minister announced that it will not be possible to resume face-to-face learning immediately after the February half-term and instead hopes it will be safe to commence the re-opening of schools and colleges from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. This is in response to the national public health data and pressure on NHS capacity. Education settings, parents and carers will be given at least two weeks' notice to prepare for a return to face-to-face education.

School will remain open to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers who have no alternative childcare provision after February half-term, as we are now. As the number of positive cases continues to rise amongst staff in school – 8 positive with a further 3 isolating due to contact with positive cases, I would stress the government message of keeping children at home if you can. We are fortunate at present that we have not had to close a bubble due to illness of staff, but this may be the case moving forward. The safety of your child and staff is the school's number one priority and all school decisions about school places will be guided by this. For some of you, we understand that your work is of such critical importance that your child absolutely has to be in school. However, if you qualify as a critical worker, but can manage to have your children at home, please do so. We recognise that home learning is really hard, but we also know that you are doing your very best, as we are too. We are here to help and support in any way we can.

Government guidance published on 7<sup>th</sup> January reinforces this point. It says **"Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can."** Government guidance also says that there should be a place for children of critical workers **"who need to attend."** We are very aware that the number of children attending school at present is 4 times higher than that of the previous lockdown and we are also aware when advantage is being taken of critical worker status when it is not required. It is our duty to you, our families, to address this issue to ensure that we are all doing everything we can to keep children and staff safe to support the potential wider opening of schools on the 8<sup>th</sup> March. There is nothing we want more than to be able to safely open our doors and welcome our children back to school.

After half term, all other children will continue to receive high quality remote education at home. This is in line with the wider national lockdown measures to help minimise the spread of the virus and respond quickly to the new variant. Education attendance restrictions are to be reviewed again in mid-February when the Government will look at when more children can be brought back into schools.

Please be assured that we will continue to work with you to support all children and families during the continuation of national lockdown. We appreciate how difficult this is for many of you juggling work commitments and wider responsibilities and we thank you for all you are doing. We are keen to ensure that all families have the resources and equipment required to access the curriculum alongside resources to support the physical, emotional, mental health and well-being of all children. Please as always, contact school if you require any further support or alert staff



during the daily/weekly communication via email and phone call and we will do all we can to help. Hopefully the end is in sight but for now, if you can, please keep your child at home as it really is the safest place for them, for you and the wider community.

Thank you for your continued support

Nichola Russell

Headteacher

