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National Lockdown

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you know, we have had to work very quickly to respond to the 8pm National lockdown announcement of Monday 4th January. As a school we thank you for your kind comments and messages of support. These are very much appreciated and welcomed.

We realise that this is a very challenging situation once again for everyone and we appreciate everything that you are all doing to support our children, school, and each other whilst adhering to the expectations of national lockdown.

We are currently under a stay at home direction and many parents are now working at home. Some can and should be keeping their child safe at home, safe from infection of this new variant of the virus that spreads more easily and quickly. However, already this week, the numbers of children in school are more than 3 times higher than they were in the first lockdown.

Guidance published on the 7th January 2021 states that: Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections. Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required, **but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.**

Please carefully consider whether your child definitely need to be in school with us every day, or whether reduced days are an option due to rota/shift patterns, or if a child only needs to be in school for extremely limited hours of the day due to specific short working patterns linked to job role. We would discourage parents putting their child at increased risk of spending a full day in school, should only an hour or two per day be required. Our remote education curriculum is exactly the same whether children are in school or at home. We would not be raising this matter if we were not worried about managing the potential spread of any virus getting into the school.

Critical workers are entitled to take up a place with school if they need it. However, for others where this is not necessarily the case, the safest place for children to be in a national lockdown situation is at home. This week we have had in-depth discussions about children accessing school provision, potentially unnecessarily in some cases, and we are seeking further ways to ensure that Health and Safety is maintained for all.

Please only access school provision as a last resort and please keep your child at home if you can. It is vital that we all adhere to the government rules, to ensure lockdown is not extended further. Our responsibility is to keep everyone safe.

Nichola Russell

