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TO ALL FAMILIES ACROSS THE LEARN TO LIVE FEDERATION

Dear Families,

A number of families have exercised their right to keep their children/young people at home during this lockdown, where you can assure their safety and that of your families. This will be considered an authorised leave of absence so please do not worry that you will be challenged or penalised for your decision. The current situation is terrifying and your decision is fully understandable. Your teacher will be in contact to discuss with you how we can support your child with online learning and resource packs. For those pupils eligible for free school meals, vouchers are being arranged and will be sent home as soon as possible.

For those whose children are attending school, there are a couple of updates you need to know.

In order to continue to keep everyone as safe as possible during this unprecedented and deeply worrying time, we are constantly reviewing and adjusting our risk assessments and procedures in school. I am sure you can appreciate this is a very fine balance. Operating safely, both in terms of Covid-19 and ensuring safe staffing levels, is of the utmost priority. We also must ensure that your children are happy as well as having their needs met while they are in school.

We therefore propose to take this Friday, 8th January 2021 as a planning day and close for pupils for one day only. We need this day in order to make essential contingency plans in case things get worse and we have to move to a rota system with blended learning. We also need to fully prepare the launch of our new online learning platform for Monday 11th January 2021 (which will be a fantastic resource for you and your children whether they are in school or at home). Thirdly, we have been supplied with lateral flow testing kits and need to carry out our first round of testing. We will be mass-testing all staff throughout the day this Friday, but as this is the first time we have done it, we need to run it as a trial and iron out any issues that may arise. By doing this, we will be prepared for the proposed weekly testing going forward.

From week commencing 11th January 2021, the school day on Monday to Thursday will be 9 am until 3 pm, as it was during the Summer Term. The Transport Dept are currently liaising with their contractors to facilitate this change of time, but we will confirm the actual start date as soon as we hear back from Transport.

This change is necessary because, as with the previous lockdown period, it is unlikely that staff will be taking lunch breaks and will not be accessing shared staff spaces, thereby maintaining the integrity of the bubbles by not mixing together. This worked extremely well throughout the Summer Term, both for children and staff, so we are returning to those arrangements that have been successful previously.

A reminder that on Fridays starting from next week, the school day for pupils will finish at 2.15 pm to allow lateral flow testing of staff to take place. By carrying out tests on a Friday, should any staff show a positive result, they will have the time over the weekend to get an NHS test and receive the result before the following Monday.

Thank you for the many messages of support we have received. I know that these are very worrying times. We will endeavour to keep the schools open as much as we can for as long as we can, as long as it is safe to do so.

Yours faithfully



Jacqui Warne
Executive Head

