



Aspire, Believe - Together Achieve

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## NATIONAL LOCKDOWN ROUNDUP – 8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have reached the end of what has been a very eventful week, it has not been the start of term we had planned but everyone has tried their best to make it calm and safe for the children. I feel it is important to confirm and clarify the school position and the information that has been sent to you this week. I am aware that there has been a number of communications as we have been receiving guidance and working to safely open.

### HOME LEARNING

We are proud of the home learning available to pupils during this lockdown. Teachers and Teaching Assistants have been working hard to prepare lessons and resources that pupils can access. Mrs Cornelius has sent home the guidelines and expectations, these are also available on the website. We know that lots of you will be juggling working from home, home schooling more than one child and keeping your families safe. We are very grateful for all of the learning you do at home and would like to re-emphasise that you are doing a fantastic job! My message to you is to **do what you can** and ask us for help if you need it.

### KEY WORKER GROUPS

On Monday evening we had no choice but to close the school. Since then we have planned and prepared for the safe education of children whose parents are both critical key workers and our most vulnerable pupils. For those of you who are sending your children to school I want to clarify the Local Authority guidance from which we have planned.

*The reason schools are now **only** open to critical workers and vulnerable pupils, is that rates of infection have increased and therefore schools have been asked to limit the numbers of Children and Young People (CYP) to those where it is **absolutely essential**.*

*If a CYP has two critical worker parents, then they will require a place, equally if a child has a single parent who is also a critical worker they will also require a place. Where there are two adults/parents within the household, where only one is a critical worker but the other is not, then if the one who is not a critical worker **is able** to provide childcare then this is the preference; as this can then reduce the numbers of CYP in attendance, minimising risk of any virus transmission.*

At the time of writing this we are expecting between 25-30% of our school community on site, this is just about manageable alongside the home learning offer we are providing. This is a much higher demand than the previous lockdown and if numbers continue to increase we will need to review our provision. Government guidance is that the safest place for everyone is at home.



Any decisions we make will be based on:

- The safety of our pupils and staff. We must maintain this in order to provide essential onsite provision, which directly supports the frontline staff responding to the COVID 19 pandemic.
- The home learning strategy is now our legal duty, unlike previous lockdown. We are committed to prioritising this as a quality experience for our children's education.
- The greater number of children in school directly impacts on our ability to provide home learning and therefore we need to keep numbers as low as possible in order to provide quality support and feedback.
- To increase numbers even further on site i.e. to one parent critical worker families would directly conflict with the need to reduce the transmission of the virus and remain safe.

## **REPORTING ABSENCE**

If your child is attending school any illness or illness relating to COVID 19 should still be reported in the usual way to the office via phone call or email.

If your child is at home and displays any COVID 19 symptoms you should still report this to school immediately and follow the NHS guidance which can be found on the school website.

This is a difficult and strange time for our community but we are committed to working together for the education and safety of all of our families and staff. If you are concerned or worried please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your continued support, patience and kindness it has been appreciated and helped keep the team smiling.

Assuring you of our best at all times,

Miss Sheppard and Team St Barnabas

