



## **BOWBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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Headteacher: Mrs J Glass.

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/carers,

### **Further information on school closure from January 4<sup>th</sup> 2021.**

Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic in March last year the staff of Bowburn Primary School have worked hard to make school a safe place for children to attend. We are proud that children and parents have supported our efforts and the disruption to the children's education last term was minimal.

As a staff we now feel that things are changing rapidly in the country and we are in a far more worrying position. This has changed dramatically even since schools broke up two weeks ago. The north east has been placed into Tier 4 restrictions, in line with London and other areas of the south east, where cases are rocketing and schools are being kept closed. Significant pressure is being brought to bear on Government to keep all schools in tier 4 closed initially for a period of two weeks in order to allow rates of transmission to drop. Cases of Covid are amongst the highest in the north east in Bowburn and surrounding areas. Durham County Council also are pressing Government to issue guidance to all schools in tier 4 to remain closed and provide remote learning until January 18<sup>th</sup>.

Due to the above local and national developments my staff have been advised by their unions and professional associations that they should not teach full classes at the present time as the risks to pupils, staff and communities from Coronavirus are too great. After completing a risk assessment and discussing in detail with my Chair of Governors this morning I have made the very reluctant but necessary decision to close school to all but the children of critical workers and those who are vulnerable. This will be for 2 weeks initially. This decision has also been made on the basis that I do not have the staffing to open safely to all pupils in school.

I understand that this is regrettable situation, and I do not want to disrupt your children's education any more than it has been already. As your child's headteacher I keenly feel that the best place for

children to be in school. But at all times my overriding consideration has to be the health and safety of pupils, their families and the wider community.

Arrangements for Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

- All children other than those of critical workers and those classed as vulnerable (pupils with a social worker) should remain at home.
- Critical worker parents should complete a contact form (which has been shared on the school website) and email it back to school as soon as possible in order to secure a place.
- Remote (online) learning activities for all year groups will be shared by staff via Class Dojo from tomorrow. If anyone has any issues with accessing remote learning, please get in touch with school. Staff will be regularly checking Dojo during the course of the school day to answer any queries you have and to interact with children's learning. Please be aware that your child's teacher may also be involved in teaching those pupils still attending school so may not be able to respond immediately.
- Vulnerable children and children of keyworkers, please attend either infant, nursery or junior building as normal. Start and end times and collection arrangements will remain the same as before Christmas.
- Vulnerable /key worker children in Y2 Dolphins (outdoor classroom) please come to main infant entrance rather than the outdoor classroom.
- Children will need to bring a packed lunch tomorrow and wear their full school uniform. PE kit will not be needed tomorrow. Please ensure children wear warm clothing and have a coat for when they are outside.
- We politely ask that all parents/carers involved in collecting or dropping children wear a mask or face covering and observe social distancing when moving around the sites. Children do not need to wear masks or face coverings in school.
- Children will come straight into school buildings via their normal entrances (except Dolphins as above)
- Children who are at home but are entitled to a free school meal will be provided with a packed lunch by school should it be required. Please phone school tomorrow morning before 10 am if you require a packed lunch. This can be collected by an adult from the school kitchens from 12pm.

Once again, thank you for your support and patience at this very difficult time. It is very much appreciated.

I will keep you up to date with further information later this week.

In the meantime, stay safe.

Kind regards,

Mrs Glass.