

28th January 2021

REF:210128/PDI/THI

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: Executive Principals Update Letter 28/01/2021

I'm sure that many of you will have been following the news yesterday and have picked up on the statement regarding school closures, but for those of you who may not have had the chance to see it yet, we wanted to make sure everyone was as up to date as possible.

It has been rare, since the start of the pandemic, that schools have been provided with much clarity or advance notice, but we are pleased that we now have at least some certainty about what will be happening in the coming weeks (although we are, of course, disappointed that we won't have everyone back in school for a little while yet). The key announcements from the government are as follows:

- The **earliest** schools might 'begin to re-open' will be Monday 8th March, which is the start of the third school week after the half-term holiday;
- There will be a plan/review set out on Monday 22nd February (the first day after the half-term holiday), with further updates;
- When the decision to return has been made, schools will get two weeks' notice of this.

Sadly, this means that we have at least four more school weeks of home-learning under the current arrangements. I know that this will be bitterly disappointing for many families and the children, but I hope that it provides some hope that there might be an end in sight, at least in terms of getting the children back into school.

We also received a clarification from the Department for Education (DfE) yesterday that schools would not be asked to open over half-term for children of critical workers as was the case in the first lock-down. I don't think anyone was particularly expecting there to be an offer, but I thought it was worth sharing in case anyone had been wondering.

We have had a couple of requests for places in school for critical worker children. Please note that at the start of this lockdown we gave all families the opportunity to provide evidence if they were critical workers and we kept this open for two weeks. I wrote to you to confirm that we had designed our in-school provision to meet this demand bearing in mind that we are also delivering a virtual school offer for the majority of children who should be staying at home. Therefore, any requests for places will now be refused unless parents/carers can provide written evidence that their circumstances have changed significantly. If you are struggling with home schooling, please contact us and we will advise and support wherever we can.

I have attached a document with some tips and hints which can also be found on our website with lots of other resources.

Yours Faithfully



Tehmina Hashmi
Executive Principal

