



Monday 4th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Apologies firstly for this communication at very short notice, but I am sure that you will be acutely aware of the situation that is being widely reported in the media with regard to the opening of primary schools across the country from today.

The Department for Education published plans on the 30th December 2020 for early years and the majority of primary aged children to return to school as planned on Monday 4th January. Only those primary schools in the areas where transmission of the Covid- 19 virus remains high have been directed to close to all but vulnerable and critical worker children and the government remains confident that it is safe to open all other primary schools.

A number of teaching and support staff unions have on Sunday advised their members to exercise their rights under Health and Safety laws to not return to the workplace at this present time to engage in whole class teaching. Staff will work from home and deliver remote learning and have also said that they will be available to deliver on-site work with small groups of vulnerable or critical worker children.

The union advice is not aimed at us in Yatton Schools or in Lighthouse Schools Partnership but reflects their view that the government is not acting on the recommendation of SAGE. We are nevertheless urgently reviewing our Risk Assessments at Yatton and will be doing everything that we can to update our safety practice in the light of changing circumstances.

As a result of the union action there will be insufficient staff for us to be able to open all classes for children tomorrow. Having revisited the school's operational risk assessment, and as a result of staff absence, the following arrangements will be in place for this week:

Infant School

Classes 1,2,3,4,6,7, and 9 will be open as normal to their classes.

Classes 5 and 8 will have online home learning. Critical workers and vulnerable children in these classes will be able to attend and will need to meet in the Infant hall at 9.00am

Junior School

Classes 1,7,8,9,10, 11 and 12 will be open as normal to their classes

Classes 2,3,4,5 and 6 will have online home learning. Critical workers and vulnerable children in these classes will be able to attend and will need to go to the following places:

Year 3 – Class 3 at 9.00am

Year 4 - Class 6 (bottom hut) at 9.10am

The time table for meetings with staff online will be sent out later today so that you will know what time your child's teaching will start.

Wraparound care (Breakfast and Afterschool Clubs) will be provided for children who will be attending school.

The latest developments put us all in difficult situations. As Headteacher I continue to do my utmost to maintain provision at Yatton and our Trust is engaging with the unions to explore whether there are any further steps we can take to increase staff assurance locally. I also recognise the anxiety and concerns that staff have about the government's position on school opening at a time when we are otherwise introducing drastic measures to address the spread of the virus. The picture may change very quickly and you have my assurance that I will be in touch with you again as there are further developments.

With kind regards,

Jo Keeble