Tuesday, 11th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers;

Re Covid Contingency Planning

It’s lovely to have the pupils back in school following the Christmas break! As you are aware from National Press and Government announcements, COVID Infection rates are very currently high and the Omicron variant is much more transmissible than previous variants of the virus. Public Health have however, reassured us that, for most of the population it is a less harmful variant and is causing fewer hospital admissions or serious health concerns.

As I made you aware in my previous letter; School has taken a cautious approach to relaxing restrictions over the last 18 months due to the high number of clinically extremely vulnerable pupils in our setting. We will continue to maintain cluster bubbles during this half term and this arrangement is also reflected in home school transport.

However, current self -isolation rules mean that we are experiencing some higher-than-normal rates of staff absence and we expect this to increase as a City in the coming weeks. With this in mind, the Local Authority have asked schools to have contingency plan in place, this includes making plans in case we need to close class groups or wider groups across school; due to staffing shortages.

Should we need to close groups, we will endeavour to continue to care for Children who we risk-asses as needing face to face support and also support children of Key workers.

The government has updated it’s categorisation of Key workers and I have included a link in this letter so that you can refer to this.

We need you to tell us now, if you think you are a key worker and will require school support, should we need to close your child’s class group.

Please complete the FORMS, using the link provided.

<https://forms.office.com/r/cFSVsQimnX>

We will also make this link live and available on our website. We will use the Government guidelines on Keyworker definitions to decide if we need to support you during any closures- you will be asked to provide proof of your Job Role if needed.

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| **Keyworker definitions:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>**Update to the definition of vulnerable children**The Department for Education has also updated the definition of children classed as vulnerable. Since March 2020, there are three categories of children and young people who should benefit from on-site provision:

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| * those with a social worker
* those with an Education, Health and Care Plan
* a group of children considered locally, including by settings and local authorities, to be ‘otherwise vulnerable’
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In addition to the above, this list now includes:

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| * children known to children’s social care services in the past
* children whose home circumstances might be particularly challenging because of domestic abuse, parental offending, adult mental health issues, and drug and alcohol addiction

For any pupils not able to access face to face provision we will offer Home Learning and will be in touch with you as necessary to arrange this, this will include having online TEAMS calls which will involve teachers seeing your child during the call.  |

Please be assured that any closures will be a last resort and we will exhaust every means possible to keep class groups open for face-to-face education. Thank you for your support and co-operation with the many changes we have faced in during this pandemic. We are truly blessed to have parents that on the whole, have worked with us to face the many challenges. Kind regardsText  Description automatically generatedMrs Lorraine Dawney |
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