

Mexborough St John The Baptist C of E Primary School

Together we believe, together we succeed.



Sedgefield Way, Mexborough, South Yorkshire, S64 0BE.

Headteacher: - Mr A Minor



12.01.2021

Dear parent / carers,

We continue to live through traumatic times and these last 10 months will leave a lasting imprint across our communities, with families grieving lost loved ones and many left coping with the difficulties of social exclusion and issues of mental health. I hope and pray that you and your family have remained safe and well, although I appreciate that this will be far from the case for all families and want to stress that school staff will be there for support and help.

The prime minister announced last Monday that all schools were to provide face to face learning for vulnerable and critical worker children, and all others will receive remote learning. This was a similar announcement to that made in March last year. Boris Johnson explained that schools may act as 'vectors for transmission' causing the virus to spread between households.

Yesterday Chris Whitty, acknowledged that schools have a role in the transmission of the virus, as we naturally bring households together. He was stark in his statements, explaining that the worst days are ahead of us and that the upward pressure on the rate of transmission of the new variant meant the National Lockdown was essential and schools needed to reduce numbers attending dramatically. Last Friday, Britain suffered its highest number of deaths and infections and experts fear this count will continue to spiral rapidly upwards. Chris Whitty was very clear that everyone needs to follow the rules set out of the lockdown, as it will take months before the vaccine is rolled out.

Numbers of places requested in our schools have been massively higher than in the previous lockdown, with many of our group of schools seeing requests of between 40% to 50% of all children on roll. The Independent Sage group warned that Covid-19 infections will continue to spread through classrooms where high numbers of children are attending. The danger of high numbers in school means the policy becomes less effective and the ability of teachers to deliver remote learning is undermined.

The Department for Education is now encouraging families to 'honour the spirit' of the lockdown and to keep children at home where possible. This will help break the transmission chain and keep families as safe as possible. As a group of schools, we have faced a growing number of children and staff receiving positive cases, resulting in some staff facing serious health consequences.

As such I would urge you to consider whether you need your child to receive face to face learning. Each school in our group, where the on-site attendance is above 30% will again commence a round of phone calls to parents to ascertain whether it is vital that your child continues to come to school and I ask parents to consider all options before these calls.

Please ensure that you follow all the rules that we are being asked to do and ensure that we are able to come through the coming months as well as we possibly can.

Stay safe,

David Silvester



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