



ST. ANDREW'S CE (VA) INFANT & JUNIOR SCHOOLS



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School place during lockdown - Updated Information for Critical Worker Children

13 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

On 11-01-21 the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty stated that currently about 1 in 50 people have COVID in the UK. He went on to say that you **MUST** minimise all unnecessary contact with people outside your bubble **'every unnecessary contact is a link in a chain that could lead to a vulnerable person'** adding further strain on our NHS.

In discussions with Public Health I am told that **the new highly infectious strain of COVID is now with us in Calderdale**. With the original strain of COVID, 1 person infected another person; **with the new highly infectious strain, 1 person will infect up to 7 people**. It has never been more important than now to **follow all the rules, do NOT mix with other households** and stay at home.

As you know, in March 2020 we had one group of children from across the Federation (both schools) that we looked after each day. The group had an average of between 8 to 15 children in it. We are facing an entirely different situation now with 40% of children still in attendance at the Infant School and 34% at the Junior School. Some children are in groups of 25. In order to minimise the spread of COVID, **I would urge all parents who are working at home to keep their children at home so that we can minimise unnecessary contact between pupils and the spread of the disease**.

Further Public Health guidance was issued to Calderdale schools on 12-01-21 saying 'the default position is that everyone possible should remain at home'.

Public Health are telling us that social distancing is more important in light of the new variant which is highly transmissible. Our local Public Health advice is that there needs to be a distance of 2m between all children, and an area at the front of the class that provides a 2m corridor for the teacher. We recognise that in some circumstances younger children find it difficult to maintain social distancing. However, allowing for



adequate distance between children will ensure the space available is not overcrowded. For example, a room that is 10m x 10m could safely hold 1 teacher and 20 children, but a room that is 5m x 5m could only safely hold 1 teacher and 6 children
Public Health go on to say:

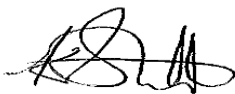
*Following allocation of places to vulnerable children, schools are advised to allocate places to critical workers. **Where possible, children of critical workers should still learn remotely.** Where all parents in the household are critical workers, the following roles should be prioritised. Please note these are not in any priority order. Any school needing to prioritise within this group should contact Public Health for further support:*

- *Frontline health professionals such as hospital doctors and nurses, GPs*
- *Personnel involved in the vaccination programme, including administrative staff*
- *Emergency services*
- *Social care staff such as those in care homes, providing home care and social workers involved in safeguarding adults and children*
- *Early years and education staff*

If space allows, the school may be able to offer places to children of other critical workers not listed above.

Following this latest advice, we will now be reviewing our current lists and contacting parents, to see if their child can work from home. If numbers continue to remain too high, we may have to direct some of our children to work from home.

Thank you for your support with these new arrangements, as we try to make the school site as safe as possible for all children, parents and staff. We thank you, in advance, for your continued patience, understanding and co-operation. Our aim is to keep everyone as safe as possible.



Mrs K. Smith
Headteacher