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3rd January 2021

Important School Update

Dear Parents / Carers,

In addition to my email yesterday, I wanted to update you with the current situation. During the course of today, the government reaffirmed its position that schools are safe. However, the unions that many of the teachers and support staff are members of are being advised that they should only make themselves available to support remote learning and should not return to face to face teaching. This would not be strike action, but using Section 44 of the Employment Rights Act which relates to working in a safe environment.

At Highwood we have made the school as safe as possible, but I am unable (nor have I ever tried) to guarantee 100% that the Covid-19 virus would not be caught or transmitted in the setting. Staff will make the decisions that are right for them and their families and I fully support them with this.

What I know so far:

- **Nursery** will only be open for Key Worker and vulnerable families. We will contact you tomorrow to confirm who this applies to. All other nursery children will be able to access remote learning from Tuesday.
- **Breakfast club and After School Club** is likely to only be available for Key Worker and vulnerable families. I cannot make this decision yet as I am still receiving messages from staff about being in school and therefore want to give you as much time as possible to plan alternative arrangements. It would be worth families making contingency plans in case the provision has to be closed whilst we are in Tier 4.
- **Some classes** may be learning remotely as early as Tuesday due to availability of staff for face to face teaching. Key Worker and vulnerable pupils will still be able to attend school – we will contact you to confirm this, if necessary. Once I have assessed the staffing capacity, I will confirm any further changes that may need to be made.

The Government's Key Worker list can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

I apologise for not being able to give you a fully completed plan, but even as I am typing this email I am having to change sections due to emails coming in to my inbox. As and when I have further updates, I will be in contact so that you have the information at the earliest opportunity.

Thank you for your support with this extremely challenging situation.

Best wishes,

Matt Hickey

Headteacher