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| **LOGOFINISH** | **St Alban’s CE Primary School**  **Executive Headteacher: Mrs Alison Adair**  **Head of school: Mrs Amy Gurner**  **Morthen Road, Rotherham, S66 1EU. Tel: 01709 542878.**  **Email:** [**stalbans@sap.dsat.education**](mailto:stalbans@sap.dsat.education)  **Website: wsap.academy**  ***“Educating for life in all its fullness.”*** | /var/folders/jc/yq40x3qx4tl3xcjfkdzmxsr80000gn/T/com.microsoft.Word/WebArchiveCopyPasteTempFiles/logo.jpg |

4th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the new school year!

In our last letter to you over the weekend, we said we would write again with more details about what would happen in the event of potential school closures. School is open as usual for now for all children, but we want to give you clarification about the current debate and concerns in education behind the scenes (which you will have heard about through the media), how this could potentially affect the school’s ability to remain open in the short term and what we would do if this were to happen. We stress again that at the time of writing we remain open to all pupils and we are hopeful that it will remain this way. It is also worth noting that at the time of writing, levels of transmission are lower in our area than they were in late Autumn.

***Current debate and concerns:***

The background: Infections rates are rising nationally and there is uncertainty about whether or not the new Covid variant is easily transmissible in children. SAGE are advising schools move to online teaching temporarily, and the government have made this decision for some schools already. At the time of writing, there have been no government directives for further schools to move to online teaching.

In the last few days, both teacher unions and support staff unions have written to members to say that there should be a consistent approach across the country and have told staff that they have a statutory right under health and safety legislation to refuse to attend workplaces they consider to be unsafe (section 44 and 100 Employment rights Act 1996). Employers have a legal duty to ensure staff are safe, and the unions are arguing that government hasn’t provided us with the sufficient ability to make this decision.

***How could this impact on school’s ability to stay open for all pupils?***

There is a possibility that, if staff invoke their statutory right to refuse to attend the workplace which they consider to be unsafe, school could find itself in a position whereby we would have to temporarily move learning online because we would not have a safe ratio of adults to pupils to remain open. We will keep you informed if it is looking likely.

There is also a possibility that, if infection rates rise in our area, the government could request that we temporarily move learning online (this is not the case at the time of writing).

***What are we planning as a school if we are required to close temporarily in the future?***

* Teaching would move online for pupils at home, as happens in a bubble closure. Teaching would be face to face virtually, with lessons throughout the day as a class with the class teacher. This has worked well when we have had bubble closures.
* School would be open for key workers and vulnerable pupils (those with an Education and Health Care Plan or with a social worker). As teachers cannot run both online teaching for pupils at home and key worker provision in school, this provision will be run by our teaching assistants under the direction of teachers. It is only right and fair that those children who were at home in the first lockdown and missed out on face-to-face teaching have access this time to teachers.
* In order to access key worker provision, you will need to submit an application form if you believe you are in an eligible profession (the application form will be attached along with this letter). The application form requests contact details for your employers, so that school can confirm that you are eligible for a place (we would expect that, where there are two parents, both attend a workplace).

We hope that this letter has helped you all understand the potential action that may take place. Please contact us with any further questions you may have.

We all believe that the best place for children to be is in school, and we understand and sympathise with the challenges that potential closure place on our working families. The information in this letter may never be needed and we may find that we are not asked to close or are not in a position to need to close due to staffing levels, but we wanted to keep you as well informed as possible.

As a school, we have reviewed our current risk assessments on return after the Christmas break and we consider them to be as effective as possible in keeping everyone as safe as we possibly can. We have also reviewed the current transmission rates in the local area, and they are in fact lower currently than they were in November.

Thank you all again for your continued support in these challenging times for us all,

Mrs Alison Adair Mrs Amy Gurner

Executive Headteacher Head of School

**Request for access to Key Worker provision during potential school closure.**

As outlined by the government, following school closure due to Covid-19, the school will remain open for the children of ‘critical workers’, key workers, so that they can continue to provide essential services. This form helps school prepare for any potential school closure in the future.

In order for pupils to access this provision, at least one parent/ carer within the household must be a key worker who will be working at the time that their child(ren) will be in school, and, where there are two parents, we expect that the second parent will also be at work at the time your child/ren are at school. This provision will be available as needed between 8.40am to 3pm Monday to Friday for as long as we have staffing available to provide it or until government advice is changed.

If you wish to use this provision, please complete the following information to support this request for key worker provision within school during school closure and email the information to school. Please note that we will be contacting all employers named in the information below to confirm that you will be working at the time your child is in school and that at least one parent is a key worker.

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| **Key worker parent/ carer details** | |
| Name of parent/ carer 1: |  |
| Job title: |  |
| Nature of work: |  |
| Mobile number: |  |
| Employer name and contact details (email and telephone): |  |
| Name of parent 2 (where applicable): |  |
| Nature of work: |  |
| Mobile number: |  |
| Employer name and contact details (email and telephone): |  |
| **Name(s) of child(ren)** | |
| Child 1 (name and year group) |  |
| Child 2 (name and year group) |  |