

Monday 4th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware, the next few weeks and even days are somewhat unpredictable. However, we have good systems in place that follow the Government guidance to schools and have contingency plans should things change. We are always reviewing our risk assessments to see what else we could do and monitoring to ensure they are being adhered to.

Here are some more details of current and future plans. Please read them carefully – thank you for your support.

Closure of Classes/Bubbles/further local or national lockdowns

We will let you know as soon as possible should there be any further changes. This could be due to Government decision making or a school situation. Please be aware that this could be at very short notice – we apologise in advance if this happens. If we have any closures, we would then switch to remote learning for all affected pupils. Zoom sessions would start on the second day – we would advise you if the times published on our website would change.

Children who are vulnerable (for example, have an EHCP or a social worker) or who have a parent who is a critical worker would still be able to access on-site schooling. We would send home a Form to that class/bubble/whole school at that point. We do have this information for most families from the Spring/Summer 2020 lockdown to start us off; however, we realise situations do change.

Depending on numbers, we might have to prioritise who gets a place, so please complete that Form in as much detail as possible, so we can gauge numbers.

What will change now we are in Tier 4?

It has been lovely to “see” our staff in our remote sessions so far today. We have done a full review of our risk assessments. We have made a few internal changes - these are the ones your child might notice.

- Staff will now wear masks in all communal areas, such as corridors and halls (unless they are exempt). Please tell your child about this – we will too, so they aren’t surprised. Children are used to adults wearing a mask so this won’t be unusual to them.
- Some staff may choose to wear a visor in class. These will be transparent so won’t interfere with teaching. Again, children will be used to seeing these and will quickly stop noticing, I’m sure.
- We are continually reviewing and tweaking measures at the moment – we will let you know of anything else that impacts on the children directly.

Parents – how can you help?

- Please continue with all the things you were doing last term.
- Do not send your child into school with any of these symptoms.
 - Temperature over 37.8
 - A new, persistent cough

- Loss of smell or taste

If your child or anyone has symptoms, you must self-isolate. Please inform the school as quickly as possible, noting the symptoms and when they started.

Please seek a test and inform school about the results. <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

- Be cautious around any other ill health symptoms. We don't want anyone's immune system challenged at the moment. I would advise caution if they are unwell for other reasons – monitor your child for a day to see if they develop COVID symptoms, rather than sending them in. The remote learning is available all the time, so if your child is able to work, then please support them to access this.
- We ask you to maintain your distance between yourselves, other parents and our staff. The regular Tier 4 advice is to only be outside with one member of another household, still then at a 2-metre distance. Think 2metres + when considering your distance from others.
- If you have siblings in the playground or are child-minding larger numbers, please keep them with you. Even if they are mixing with peers who are in their school bubble, we don't want to have groups of children mixing in our playgrounds.
- Warm clothing/ventilation – as we have to keep the classes well ventilated, please ensure your child wears additional layers to keep warm, particularly in these chilly winter months.
- Outside of school – please follow all the Tier 4 guidance. We are all in this together!

Attendance to School

Attendance to school is still a requirement for all pupils unless they are clinically extremely vulnerable (you would have a shielding letter – please inform us if this applies to your child) or if you are following the rules on quarantining. We do completely appreciate that everyone is worried but school attendance is currently mandatory. If you decide to keep your child away from school at this time, it will be unauthorised. However, we have no plans to fine families, as we understand everyone's reasons. Please let us know each week if you intend to keep your child off school, so we can update our records.

Remote Learning

The [remote learning policy](#) is on our website. Please note -we are only required to provide this for children who HAVE to be away from school, not for families who choose to keep their child off. However, as the remote learning is available each week, we would encourage any absent child who is well enough, to be supported to keep up with their learning at home. Teachers will only run Zoom sessions if we close a group/class. Where parents have chosen to keep their child off, parents will need to mark this work at home.

Returning from Abroad

Please check the government guidance for the country you have returned from. Inform school of this information, the dates you travelled and when your child will be returning to school.

We will keep in touch as and when we need to share more information.

Please stay safe – we will look after each other and keep our Polehampton spirit going throughout!

best wishes

Miss Ball, Mrs Medcalf, Mrs Castell and Mrs Scott.