



Head's

Update

January 2021

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT OUR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to start by saying that I hope you have all had a lovely Christmas holiday period and we looking forward to welcoming our children back to school. I am writing in response to the developing news stories surrounding schools and reopening, particularly over the last 24 hours. It is clear that January will be very challenging, particularly now that we are in Tier 4 and there are additional restrictions and measures in place but also because of this fast-paced and evolving picture that appears to be unfolding. You may have seen the advice that certain school staff unions are giving to their members. I am in close contact with the members of staff at school and I do want to publicly announce how immensely proud I have been at their diligence and dedicated effort in response to the pandemic since its onset. The staff have upheld high standards and maintained a positive atmosphere in what has been a very difficult time. I would also say that the staff have been hugely helped by an extremely supportive governing body. As things stand, it is our intention to open as normal on Tuesday 5th January and provide a safe education for our pupils. We find out the latest news when you do, we are not given any advance notice or inside information. Currently, we have yet to receive communication or advice on these latest developments from our Local Authority. I expect a number of developments to take place over the coming days and some of these will be out of our control; we will continue to respond and adapt to these as we go along.

During this time, I think it is prevalent to look at the situation for us, specifically in Rushden. The following link will take you to the government website which provides weekly updates to the data for locations by postcode: <https://digital.nhs.uk/dashboards/coronavirus-in-your-area>

You will see from this data that as of last week, the rates of COVID infections in Rushden were relatively low in comparison to National, although this does not mean we should be complacent.

If any kind of school closure does have to take place this term, it will be as a last resort. It is crucial to try to remain optimistic that we can avoid a closure, but also to be realistic to the fact that it may happen and to be prepared for that eventuality if it does occur. As long as it remains safe for us to stay open, we will do so.

In the event of any closure, we will inform you of the next steps:

1. Parents informed of closure by email/ParentApps.
2. Closure enforced (a class, a group of classes or the whole school).
3. Remote learning implemented, work will be set through MS Teams/Purple Mash—further information will follow shortly.
4. Staff will be remotely supporting work for pupils through MS Teams/Purple Mash.
5. Some pupils may receive additional phone calls or 1:1 sessions in certain circumstances.
6. Work will be expected to be completed at home and will be turned in via MS Teams and feedback will be given by the teachers.

7. In the instance that teachers are unwell, other staff members will aim to support the running of MS Teams. If this becomes physically impossible, parents will be guided to resources that children can use to continue their learning remotely.

On Tuesday 5th January, please ensure that when your child returns they:

- Have a coat and are suitably dressed for the cold weather
- Are provided with a piece of fruit or vegetable for snack or you have ordered this on the Parent Pay App
- You send them with a packed lunch or have ordered their dinners in advance from Dolce
- They have their PE kit in school - including trainers and jogging bottoms
- They have a named water bottle in school every day

Some of you may have concerns regarding your child's return to school and this is completely understandable at this time. I can assure you that at Alfred Street, we have continued to put measures in place to ensure our children remain as safe as possible during this ever-changing situation. I do urge you to contact myself on the email at the bottom of this letter if you have any concerns prior to Tuesday. If you would prefer a phone call, then this is also possible.

Please see below for some reminders regarding the current procedures that are in place in response to COVID 19.

Bubbles:

We will be continuing with our same Bubble groupings as set out in our initial September communication. Whilst we would very much enjoy having our whole school community mix, we need to continue to limit the amount of people each child will be able to come in to contact with during each day. Classes will continue to only mix inside together in their classrooms and classes will continue to have their playtimes and lunchtimes separate, until further notice. Children will not be expected to maintain social distancing within their 'Bubble', as is recognised in the government guidelines, but it will be encouraged when possible. However, by ensuring classes only have the opportunity to mix within their own class, this limits the number of other children each child can come in to contact with, ensuring that there is as little disruption as possible, if we are to have a confirmed case of COVID in our school community. If there is a need to close a Bubble due to a positive case, we shall contact the DfE with all relevant information and gain information as to the next steps. The DfE are working alongside PHE and will pass all relevant Information to them following our call. Following this, we will contact parents/carers of any children that are directly affected. The whole school community will then be sent a letter to notify them.

Staggered School Days

At this stage, we are not making any changes to the start and finish times for any of our year groups, as this ensures limited mixing of Bubbles. Please continue to follow the same routines that were put into place back in September and continue to follow the one-way system around the school when on the school grounds. It is essential that children do not arrive at school before their allocated time unless your child is attending our 'Before School Provision'. The school gates will be locked at 9.00am. In addition, please use the entrance and exits allocated:

Year Group	Entrance/Exit	Arrival Time	Finishing Time
3	College Street Y3 Playtime door from playground	8.45am	3.25pm
4	John Street 4/5 Playtime door from playground	8.45am	3.25pm
5	John Street 4/5 Playtime door from playground	8.55am	3.35pm
6	College Street Y6 Playtime door from playground	8.55am	3.35pm

If you have children in more than one year group, siblings may go into school at the earliest time slot in the morning through their own class entrance. At home time, please collect the earliest child first and then wait in a socially distanced way around the edge of the playground for your other child(ren).

Children should not travel to or from school with other children or with another family unless they are part of the support bubble or provide child care.

At the end of the day, adults will be allowed to wait on the playground if they are wearing a face covering, to collect their children at the allocated time - **one adult per family only please.** Please do not sit on any of the benches or allow children to use the play equipment.

Parents/Carers must maintain 2m from each other on the playground and outside the school gates! If you have younger siblings with you, please keep them by your side and do not allow them to run around on the playground, as this puts others at risk.

Only Year 6 will be permitted to attend and leave school by themselves, once a permission form has been signed.

We ask that you only speak to staff face to face if the matter is urgent and you must maintain 2m when doing this, if it is not urgent, please phone/email the school office.

Handwashing, Cleaning and PPE:

We will be continuing with our strict guidance in relation to handwashing and cleaning within the school. We had increased the amount that our toilets, touch points and communal spaces are cleaned throughout the day, and continue to monitor this as the terms progress. Children and staff are still asked to frequently wash their hands throughout each school day. This will be when they leave or return to the classrooms and before and after eating. At times, the children may use hand sanitiser provided by the school. The staff in school will continue to work alongside the children in the same way as they previously have been. This means that they will be taking measures to keep themselves safe, whilst providing the best possible education to the children. PPE will only be used in school for intimate care purposes. This will also include any first aid support that the children may need.

Face Coverings:

The staff at Alfred Street will continue to wear face coverings when moving around school and in communal areas. Staff will also have the option to wear them in class, if they choose. Pupils will still not be able to wear a face covering at school. We ask that parents continue to support the school by wearing their face coverings when moving around the school site. This is to keep our staff safe, as well as other adults and children in our school community.

Home Learning:

Should we need to use it, we have a clear home learning plan in place, as outlined on our website. Work will be shared with the children through our school website as before, as well as on MS TEAMS through Office 365 or Purple Mash. Home learning will consist of interactive sessions, presentations and independent work for children to complete. There is an expectation that independent work is submitted for the teachers to feedback on daily. Home learning packs with resources and guides, will be sent home this week to be kept at home in the event of remote learning being required. School will also make arrangements with individual families to support home learning and IT requirements when needed.

Child Illnesses:

We know that at this time of year, your child may be unwell due to illnesses other than Covid. We do ask that any children that display a ***temperature, new continuous cough or loss of taste/smell, do not come in to school and you do not send your child in if someone in your household has these symptoms and are awaiting a COVID test.*** Whilst we can provide support if you are unsure of what to do, we must follow government guidance and could not give advice regarding whether any other symptoms could be linked. Please carefully consider any symptoms your child may show. If you believe that your child may have COVID, please do not send them in to school. It is important that your child then isolates and a test is completed. If your child's result is negative, and the symptoms have gone, they may then return to school. If you keep your child off school for a test, please keep the school notified at all times, regardless of whether this is during school time, or at the weekend. This will enable us to be prepared to act as quickly as possible if needed.

If your child has other illness symptoms that are not linked to COVID, please follow the usual process of reporting your child's absence.

Attendance:

There are, as yet, no changes to the government's expectations for pupil attendance – it currently remains a legal requirement for pupils to attend school and parents cannot keep their child off school due to any fears of COVID-19. Any specific individual situations or circumstances should be sent into school in writing, ideally via email to head@alfredstreet.northants-ecl.gov.uk for consideration.

Therefore, all children are expected to return to school. The only exceptions to this are if:

- a child has a written report from a medical professional that recommends that they should continue to shield;
- your child is unwell (including symptoms of or a positive test for COVID-19);
- your household has been instructed to self-isolate;
- you are quarantining after a trip abroad.

All absences must be reported in accordance with our Attendance Policy. Unauthorised absence may result in a penalty notice being issued.

Before School Provision and Clubs:

Our before school provision will continue to operate and children will be seated in their year group 'Bubbles' and social distancing maintained between 'Bubbles' and with Staff. Parents and carers are required to book for our breakfast club or early morning provision, as we are unable to handle money and we are required to limit places to enable social distancing. All provision must be booked via our online booking and payment system.

Extra Curricular Clubs and Activities:

We anticipate that our extra curricular clubs will be able to take place as they operate in class Bubbles. However, due to Tier 4 restrictions, whilst we are in Tier 4, we will not be taking the children swimming or on any trips. If the tiers change, we will review the situation and keep you informed.

Parental Support:

In order to ensure the safety of all members of the school community and wider families, every member of the community has a role to play in reducing the risk to the school and in the spread of COVID-19. We expect every member of the school community to accept these collective responsibilities and follow the Tier 4 guidance attached with this document. Below are some additional key points for parents/carers:

- Please do not come to school or send your child to school if anyone in your household is displaying symptoms, however mild, of COVID-19.
- Parents/carers must be available to collect their child at any point during the school day if required and it is essential that you keep us informed of any changes to contact details.
- Engage with the test and trace process when required. Telephone 119 or visit [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus).
- Please keep in good contact with the school to tell us if your child or household needs to self-isolate and of the outcome of any results.
- Adhere to the social distancing measures in and out of school.
- Do not mix with other families indoors unless you meet the requirements of a support bubble and they are your sole support bubble.
- Only 2 people to meet outdoors in public spaces.

We have had complaints from parents, about a number of parents who are stood together outside the school gates not socially distancing. We have also had reports from children that they have had people come to their houses to cut their hair, have been for sleepovers and have had other people come round to their houses during Lockdown and when restrictions have been in place. **We ask that you do not congregate in groups outside school or mix with other families unless a specific support bubble, as this not only goes against the Tier 4 regulations, but puts our whole school community at risk.**

I would like to remind parents that our risk assessment is available upon request and we do have various links and information on our school website that may be valuable to read. We aim to respond as quickly as we can to any enquiries and are typically able to respond within our expected 48-hour window. I am aware that some parents will be understandably concerned that the new strain is affecting a higher number of younger people. We must carry on working hard collectively to provide a safe environment for everyone connected with Alfred Street Junior School. If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at head@alfredstreet.northants-ecl.gov.uk.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy New Year. We look forward to making some fantastic memories with yourselves and your children in 2021.

Mrs K O'Connor
Head Teacher

CORONAVIRUS TIER 4

STAY AT HOME

gov.uk/coronavirus

If you live in a Tier 4 area, you cannot join or form a Christmas bubble. You must not leave or be outside of your home except for specific purposes.

<p>MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY </p>	<p>BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS </p>	<p>RETAIL </p>	<p>WORK AND BUSINESS </p>
<p>No household mixing, aside from support bubbles and two people meeting in public outdoor spaces.</p>	<p>Hospitality closed, aside from sales by takeaway, drive-through or delivery.</p>	<p>Essential shops can open. Non-essential retail must close and can only open for click-and-collect and delivery.</p>	<p>Everyone must work from home unless they are unable to do so.</p>
<p>EDUCATION </p>	<p>INDOOR LEISURE </p>	<p>ACCOMMODATION </p>	<p>PERSONAL CARE </p>
<p>Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open during term time. Registered childcare, other supervised activities for childcare purposes, and childcare bubbles permitted</p>	<p>Closed.</p>	<p>Closed (with limited exceptions)</p>	<p>Closed.</p>
<p>OVERNIGHT STAYS </p>	<p>WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS </p>	<p>ENTERTAINMENT </p>	<p>PLACES OF WORSHIP </p>
<p>You must not stay overnight away from home. Limited exceptions apply.</p>	<p>Funerals of up to 30 people permitted. Wakes and other linked ceremonial events can continue in a group of up to six. Weddings of up to six can continue in exceptional circumstances.</p>	<p>Indoor entertainment closed. Some outdoor attractions may remain open.</p>	<p>Open for private prayer and communal worship, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.</p>
<p>TRAVELLING </p>	<p>EXERCISE </p>	<p>RESIDENTIAL CARE </p>	<p>CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE</p>
<p>You must stay at home and only travel for work, education or other legally permitted reasons. If you must travel, you should stay local, and reduce the number of journeys you make. You must not leave a Tier 4 area or stay overnight away from home. Residents in Tiers 1 - 3 should not enter Tier 4 areas. Do not travel abroad if you live in a Tier 4 area unless an exemption applies.</p>	<p>You can leave your home to exercise by yourself, with your household or support bubble, or with one person from another household. Outdoor sport allowed but gatherings limit applies except for youth and disabled sport.</p>	<p>You can visit relatives in care homes with COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits.</p>	<p>The Clinically Extremely Vulnerable are advised to stay at home as much as possible, except to go outdoors for exercise or to attend health appointments.</p>

For support and more information visit:
gov.uk/coronavirus

