



Tuesday 12th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Covid 19 Update

I am writing to inform you of some recent updates from the Department for Education and some of the changes that we have had to make both in school and as part of our remote learning offer. The most recent guidance for parents can be found here in relation to schools:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

What we know:

- The Country is in National Lockdown.
- There is a rapid rise of infection, hospital admissions and case rates across the country. Our hospitals are now under more pressure than they have been at any other point throughout the pandemic. Lincoln is one of these, hundreds of staff at the hospital are unable to work either due to illness, self-isolation or stress.
- Scientists have now confirmed that the new variant of COVID-19, is between 50 and 70 per cent more transmissible.
- The Government have asked us to: Stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives
- Schools were told to close on Monday 4th January to all but critical worker children and those who are Vulnerable.
- December 31st there was a change in guidance to Keyworker criteria from the previous lockdown.

We are aware that a lot of parents are still expected to attend work or work from home, which puts a lot of pressure on families to support their child's learning and complete daily work commitments. Both parents and school staff are under a lot of pressure to provide quality provision alongside providing provision for pupils in school.

Message from the DfE on Friday 8th January 2021

The Department for Education (DfE) updated its guidance for critical workers on Friday evening, and advised parents and carers of children who are eligible for a school place that they should keep them at home if possible.

What can you do?

- Please keep your children at home if at all possible. With the introduction of family support bubbles this time, it may enable you to keep your children within a tighter family bubble, than in school.
- Talk to your employer of the change in guidance and the clear message 'Stay at home'.
- **Under no circumstances send your child into school, if they or any of the family have COVID type symptoms or are poorly.**
- **Only** book your child into the keyworker provision on days you have to work.

This does also mean that we will not be able to offer in school support for children who are on the Additional Needs register (except those with an EHCP) or children who are struggling with home learning.

We can however, provide support and additional training or resources to parents. By helping us reduce the number of children in school, you are helping keep the children who have to be in school, in smaller bubbles and reduce the risk of closing so we can still remain open for critical workers.

Remote learning

Thank you to those parents who attended the Parent Forum on Friday. It was useful to see what was working and also what families were finding difficult. We will continue to review Remote learning either via a parental questionnaire or the Parent Forums. Please continue to provide feedback so that we can work together to make home learning more accessible for all families.

Please find a link below with further guidance and information from Ofsted about Remote Education.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-working-well-in-remote-education/whats-working-well-in-remote-education>

As you can see, the message is clear to 'keep it simple' and know what works best for our children and families in our school. Many schools across Lincolnshire are providing a range of provision. We know that what works well for one family or child, won't work for others so a flexible and varied approach is what we encourage. This is why we have offered live sessions, pre-recorded lessons and printed packs (please request these by Thursday 11.30am each week).

Expectations

We appreciate that some families may find submitting work difficult or attending all of the live sessions a challenge when you have more than one sibling at home, but more guidance has been sent from the DFE with regards to learning and expectations. Where it has worked well, children have a set timetable to work from with breaks and time to play in between. We expect the following cooperation and would appreciate your support with meeting the following requirements:

- **All** children to register for the daily sessions. (this is to ensure we meet all relevant Safeguarding and attendance expectations)
- **All** children to submit at least daily english and mathematics learning.

All other learning can be shared via the live afternoon sessions or by attaching photographs or videos onto Microsoft Teams or via the closure account: closure@welbourn.lincs.sch.uk

All core learning work will have feedback given by the teachers. This may be daily or weekly, depending on when it is submitted.

If these requirements are not being met, we will have to follow the procedure below:

Step 1 – An email from the class teacher to 'check in' with the family to see why children did not attend or have not submitted work and to offer support.

Step 2 – A phone call home from the Headteacher to further explain the expectations and offer further support.

Step 3 – Inform the parent that a Fixed Penalty Notice for failure to engage with the school work would typically be imposed under section 444A and 444B of Education Act 1996 so an action plan would be implemented in order to improve level of engagement with SMART targets for parents to complete. In some circumstances this may become a safeguarding issue and step 4 would be implemented.

Step 4 – Raise concerns in line with safeguarding procedures.

If your child is ill or unable to attend a call for any reason, please let teachers know so that we do not have to follow the usual safeguarding and attendance procedures.

Supporting your child at home

Learning has been pitched to meet the needs of each child in the class. This means that children in Amethyst should be able to get on with their work without any help most of the time. They have video clips to teach them concepts and Mrs Stanton is on hand to help if needed.

For children who are younger, they should still also be able to do a mixture of independent learning and work which requires help from an adult. If your child is struggling to work independently, please contact your child's class teacher who can provide additional support and advice.

Live sessions

During live sessions, for safeguarding purposes and to reduce distraction, we ask for the following:

- All children to be fully dressed
- Children to have a suitable place to work. (not in bed)
- For younger siblings not to attend the call
- That parents are nearby to assist their child (They do not need to sit and watch the calls)
- All microphones are on mute until an adult asks for children to unmute the call.
- Adults be mindful of background noise and appropriate use of language as this can sometimes be heard.

Please note that those children who are less confident can attend with the video camera off. We have also set up a 'waiting room' for calls so please wait patiently and try to attend only for the allocated time and not before or after.

Laptops and digital devices

Although we have only been allocated 2 laptops from the DFE, we still have laptops available to loan if you don't have access to a device at home or there are multiple siblings at home who require to be online at the same time.. Children can also access TEAMS on mobile phones, ipads, Playstations and the Xbox. This information has been sent out previously.

Contacting staff

We are currently working to maximum capacity for staffing due to the fact that we are providing two lots of provision, one in school and Remote learning from home. In both cases, the children are doing the same learning. Teachers are working around the clock to submit daily learning, provide weekly overviews and respond to the on-going needs from emails, messages and phone calls. We are more than happy to support all individual enquiries or needs but this has significantly increased the workload of our teachers. Although they are working from home, planning a Remote Education takes more time as resources need to be sought to support individual year groups and which can be accessible for children to use. With this in mind, we request your support to ensure that you only contact teachers on Microsoft Teams between 8.45am and 3.30pm. If you require any support outside of these hours, please email the closure account:

closure@welbourn.lincs.sch.uk. If it is urgent support, you can contact us via the school mobile number.

Teachers will not be contactable between 12 and 1pm so they can have a lunch break, attend staff meetings or training and improve their work/life balance.

Please monitor your child's use and remind your child that messaging on the chat for anything other than asking for help would be preferred as often the constant messages can be distracting to other children.

If you have any queries or concerns, please let us know. Thank you once again for your continued support. Take care and stay safe!

Kind regards
Tracy Boulter
Headteacher

