

10th December 2020

Dear parents and carers,

You will be aware from the letters that I sent out yesterday evening that our situation in school is changing rapidly in relation to COVID-19. We have significant staff absence at the current time due to staff having to self-isolate, either due to having symptoms/positive cases in their family or due to contact from Test & Trace.

We do not feel that employing a large number of supply staff to cover the absences is advisable, since this will bring considerable additional risk into the school, but we only have limited capacity for supply cover within our own staff team. Today we have just managed to provide adequate staffing, with three class bubbles newly closed, and 5 Aspen completing their self-isolation today (returning tomorrow), however, the situation is changing by the hour.

I feel that I need to warn you that we may face the situation where more classes will have to move to remote learning for the end of term. I realise that this will have implications for our families and this is something I want desperately to avoid, however, I also need to ensure that all children and staff can be in school safely, with adequate supervision. I feel that we should all plan for the worst-case scenario and hope for the best, which is that we can remain open for the majority of our children until the end of term.

At this point, the following classes will need to stay at home and access remote learning:

- 4 Rowan - returning to school on Thursday 17th December
- 5 Alder - returning to school on Friday 18th December
- 5 Hawthorn - returning to school in the new year
- 5 Aspen – returning to school tomorrow.

These children **do not** need to self-isolate at this point – they need to learn at home due to staff shortages.

I am sorry for any inconvenience caused to our families over this period. I hope you understand that this is a challenging time, as we balance risk to staff and children with the importance of our children being in school, and the impact of self-isolating or contracting COVID-19 over the Christmas period when so many families want to spend time with their loved ones.

Please be assured that we are reviewing the situation constantly and seeking advice from the Local Authority and Public Health to ensure we make the best decisions for our school community.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sansom

Headteacher