Thursday 7th January 2021,

Good morning everyone,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well. Today’s letter contains some very important information; please read carefully.

You will be fully aware from listening to the news that the current picture regarding Covid-19 is not a good one. Yesterday the figures reported for new cases and deaths were extremely concerning.

We need to make some changes to how we are operating in school. It seems like one day I’m giving out a message and by the next day the message has changed. I do apologise for this but it is reflective of the short (arguably no) notice that we are being given and then the flurry of advice and guidance that follows over the next few days.

I am constantly keeping up to date with everything that is being shared with us and the message is now that **we need to reduce numbers in school to as low as we possibly can do**. When we locked down in March/April we were having between 8 and 20 pupils in school each day. On Tuesday we had 26, yesterday we had 56 and we are looking at potentially 80 pupils on Monday. This is very typical in many schools; some are reporting that they are 70/80% full. With these numbers the lockdown is not going to achieve what it needs to. I still have some further requests for places sitting in my emails and have deliberately not responded to these until this letter has gone out, I hope you understand why.

The key message that I am now hearing is that parents should only be sending children into school **where there are no alternatives.** Therefore from Monday our approach will be changing:

* We are now allowing parents who have already been offered a place to send their children into school on a part time basis. This will be more structured than it was last spring. Your options are:
  + Your children can attend for the full day (9.00am – 3.30pm)
  + Just for the morning session (9.00am – 12.00pm)
* Little Crickets will remain open **but only for children whose parents qualify as Key Workers.** Mrs Williamson or Mrs Dobbie will be contacting you all directly.
* Kidspace will still be open and this position has not changed – only book sessions if you really need to because of your work commitments.

If your child is not in school then it is expected that they will engage in remote learning.

You know that this is the last thing that I want to do – I want to see every single one of you back in school on a full time basis but at this moment we have to put the health and safety of pupils, parents, staff and the wider community as our top priority.

If you have already been offered a place in school then please can I ask you to email [admin@highfieldsnantwich.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:admin@highfieldsnantwich.cheshire.sch.uk) **as soon as you possibly can do** to let us know which days/mornings you need your child to attend. The sooner we get this information the sooner I can let you know how things will work next week.

I do not intend to operate the way that we did in March, with all children in one group – there will be much more of an education focus this time, you can be assured of that.

**For pupils that have been offered a place due to Special Educational Needs you do not need to email us – you will be contacted directly over the next few days so that we can discuss plans with you.**

**Statutory Assessments:**

Yesterday it was confirmed that all statutory assessments for Primary schools, most notably the Y6 SATS have been removed for 2021. Further information about this will follow when we have it.

Once again I thank you for your amazing support and I apologise again for the constant changes in arrangements. I promise you that all arrangements will be regularly reviewed and I will keep you up to date.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Dyson

Principal