



Baines' Endowed

Church of England Primary Academy

A member of **CIDARI**

Penrose Avenue
Blackpool
FY4 4DJ

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Sunday 3rd January 2021

Dear Parent/ Carer

I hope that you and your family have been able to enjoy a peaceful Christmas and are looking forward to a better new year. I apologise for needing to send this letter late on a Sunday evening, however it is necessary.

Unfortunately, as you will be aware from the news this weekend, there is growing concern nationally in relation to the spread of the second variant of COVID-19 and the impact on schools. Education unions have deemed that in the current climate, schools are not safe workplaces and advised their members that they can enforce their right, under section 44 of the Health and Safety Act, not to come into school. As a result, our Academy now finds itself without our usual staffing levels and without the flexibility that is required to manage our normal daily provision. This is not a situation that we wanted to find ourselves in. We have worked tirelessly to make our Academy as safe as it can possibly be, and my priority has always been to support our pupils, parents, workforce and the community that we serve in the safest and best possible way. Unfortunately, we are required to react to national directives from the government that do not always reflect what is happening in our local area.

For the week commencing Monday 4th January all classes are able to return to school at their usual staggered times, however the following changes to school have had to be made:

- 5KL will be taught by Mr. Fox this week, as Miss Lee is unable to return to school at the moment.
- **Before and After-School Clubs will be available for this week only** to allow parents and carers to make alternative arrangements from Monday 11th January, until the time at which we will be able to reopen our wraparound care provision. This adjustment is necessary, as we must reduce the risk of spreading the new strain of the virus, which is more contagious and easily transmitted than the original virus. Masks will be available for children to wear this week, with parents/carers approval. Please speak to Early Birds and Bridges staff if your child attends our before and/or after-school provision and you would like your child to wear a mask this week.
- All teachers must legally receive half a day of Planning Preparation and Assessment time each week. This is usually covered in school by our permanent team of three PPA teachers. Unfortunately, due to the changes needed as a result of the R number increasing across the



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country, we are not able to cover PPA for all classes, so all teachers will have their PPA in school at the same time on a Friday afternoon. This will mean that **school must close at 12:15 p.m. each Friday**. A new set of staggered finish times for each class will be sent to parents/ carers tomorrow. I realise this is not ideal, however I am required to follow legal requirements for all groups of people within our school community.

- Similar to the arrangements from March until June last year, Keyworker families will be able to secure a place for their child to attend school on Friday afternoons. Please note, although teachers will be in school, they will not be teaching children, so Keyworker children will be taking part in activities in small groups with children from their own class, guided by the usual Support Staff who work with them in their classroom.

Until further notice, if any member of staff is unable to work in school as a result of Covid or illness, supply staff will not be allowed into school to cover that class, therefore, in instances where school is unable to provide adequate staffing for your child's class, the class will move to remote learning at home via Google Classroom. Families who require support with remote learning should have already informed school and if not, can still do so. No visiting teachers will be allowed into school until further notice: this includes our sports coaches.

All previous arrangements regarding additional cleaning, staggered toilet times, staggered break and lunchtimes, use of PPE will continue to take place in school, until it is safe to return to normal routines.

Our Keyworker Form will be sent out to all parents/carers tomorrow: please complete it and return it to school immediately. Thank you.

This is a fast developing situation and our focus is, as always, to ensure the safety and well-being of all of our Baines' children, staff, parents and governors. We appreciate the anxieties you will have as this situation continues to develop; we remain contactable during office hours: 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. Any emails received outside of this time will be picked up when the office reopens.

Information regarding Free School Meal arrangements will be sent out to parents/carers in the next few days.



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If you have any concerns regarding the aforementioned changes, or if you or your family need support, please do not hesitate to contact school.

Finally, please be assured that if there is ever a solution, whereby I can keep school and all facilities open to all pupils all of the time, that is the option I will choose. Until then, myself and my staff will continue to endeavour to provide your children with the best education possible, within the safest possible environment.

I will be in contact with more information as the week progresses.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. Rusling
Headteacher



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