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Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Following on from my letter to you on Saturday, I am writing to update you on the situation as things stand.

### Weekend Developments

You may be aware that on Saturday the NEU, NASUWT, ACSL and the NAHT all called for schools to remain closed for all but vulnerable pupils and those of critical worker parents; this was also backed by the GMB and UNISON in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community. At the time of writing this, there has been no response from the DfE.

The NAHT and ASCL have also launched legal action against the government in part because they feel that the government is not being led by the scientific advice that has been made public.

Yesterday, Roger Gough (Leader of Kent County Council) has also written to the Education Secretary urging him to keep primary schools closed in Thanet, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe and Canterbury (the only four districts in Kent which primary schools will be open from Monday). I am also aware that Rosie Duffield MP is lobbying the DfE on this matter as well.

There have been indications that there will be an update 'in due course' and we await this with bated breath!

### Pupil Attendance

Today we have had 82 children not in school and whilst not all of these are parents that are choosing to keep their children at home, it is clear that there is a significant level of anxiety around schools being open. We will, of course, be monitoring this over the course of the week.

As I wrote on Saturday, we will continue to support families that choose to make this decision although given the number of families, we have had to adapt our approach to home-learning. This has taken a little longer than planned and I apologise that we have not yet been in contact with this work. The teachers will be setting work from the Oak Academy to support those children and families not in school and you should have this by the end of the day. We will also be arranging opportunities for contact with class teacher, TA and (hopefully) the rest of the class in a zoom call.

### Remote Learning

As you know, there is speculation in the media regarding another national lockdown and none of us know if schools will be included in this. Please can I ask that you take the time to check that you are able to log onto Microsoft Teams, Spelling Shed, Numbots and/or Times Table Rockstars.

Yours sincerely,

*James Tibbles*

