



# St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

## School Road, Marton Moss, Blackpool, FY4 5DS

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Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents,

Firstly, can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy New Year!  
I hope you are all well and are keeping safe in these very trying times.

I wanted to write to you today to explain the position the school is in regarding the most recent National Lockdown.

As you know, school held an INSET day on Monday where the teachers were busy preparing for the return to school the following day. Unlike many other schools, our staff were happy to be in school and had not decided to invoke the clause in the Health & Safety laws to work from home. We were all excited to start school again and see the children on the following day!

When the Prime Minister announced the National Lockdown, this was new information to the whole country; we did not have a 'heads-up' that this was happening.

School then spent Tuesday trying to organise those families who qualified for 'Critical Worker or vulnerable' places in school.

At the first count, there were approximately 170 requests for places in school. Since then, more and more families are requesting places, even after the day 1 deadline request. This is, as I'm sure you are aware, a huge proportion of children to allocate a place to, and does make the notion of the school being 'closed' somewhat unrealistic.

As a school, we will endeavour to allocate the places as deemed necessary whilst also trying to maintain social distancing and keep our school staff and children safe. I again ask you, if you can keep your child at home, even if you are working from home, please do so. The risks in school are getting greater every day and the more children and staff that are in school, the more serious the risk of transmission becomes.

The staff in school have to teach the children in school and also ensure the children at home are given the same opportunities. This is a huge task, and one which the staff take very seriously and want to help all our children in every way we possibly can.

The Government sets out to schools what they must do, and as a Local Authority School, we have to follow the set guidance. School has been instructed by the Department for Education to:

- set work that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school, and as a minimum:
- primary: 3 hours a day, on average, across the school cohort

It appears from comments that some parents have made either on Class Dojo or Social Media that they cannot fulfil the work set by school. Please do not worry.

The school is obliged to set the work each day– children should complete the tasks they feel able to do!

We believe that using Class Dojo is the most efficient way to both communicate with the children and to send out home learning. Senior Leaders in school spent days over the Christmas period and into this week looking at other solutions, and we still think that this is the best remote learning tool for all our families to access. We are enhancing our previous lockdown learning by sending out daily teaching videos from our own teaching staff, as well as using other educational resources.

Teachers will be using the 9am registration time to support parents in getting the ‘home-school day’ started and to guide the children through the plan for the day. The teachers will then video portions of their ‘in school teaching input’ and upload it to Dojo. This can then be watched at any time, to allow those children who cannot access the technology at a specific time, to complete the work, and even re-watch the video if they need to, in order to fully understand the concept!

Unfortunately, this morning, during the Zoom registration, a ‘swear word’ was overheard in a particular classroom from one of the children’s homes. Clearly, this is unacceptable, and should this happen again, we will have to re-think the registration time. I can only apologise to any children / other families, who may have overheard the comment.

I personally would like to say a huge thank you to our staff and families who have reacted so optimistically and supportively. Clearly, we are in the midst of a very stressful, uncertain time, and I am hopeful that as long as we all work together to support one another, for the good of our future and the children’s education, we will all be back together in school again as soon as we can!

As always, the school is here to serve the heart of the community.

If you need any support, advice or help in any way, please contact the school.

Kind regards,

Miss C Taylor

Headteacher