



**St Patrick's RCVA Primary School**

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*Head Teacher: Mrs Jennifer M Gill*

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Further to the text message sent out to parents earlier this afternoon, I would like to provide additional information regarding the start of the spring term.

No doubt you will be aware of the ongoing discussions between the Government, Trade Unions, SAGE and other professional bodies surrounding the return of pupils to school and the growing sense of unease regarding continuing high numbers of positive tests and new highly transmissible variants of Covid-19.

Following numerous discussions with stakeholders today, I made the difficult decision to move to remote learning for *at least* the first week of term. In order to enable school leaders to address the current situation and ensure that the school plan is robust, we will be **closed to ALL pupils on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January**. Children of key workers and vulnerable pupils will still attend school from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January and, from that date, remote learning (via the school website) will be available for all pupils. Staff will be working on Monday to organise and prepare for remote learning and vulnerable/key worker groups.

Parents of children who are eligible for free school meals will be contacted tomorrow to discuss options for the next week. I ask you to contact your child's class teacher via email tomorrow so that they can forward information regarding use of Teams for remote learning and provide support for home learning. Teacher email addresses are on the school website – Our Classes → Remote Learning → choose year group (EYFS will continue to use Tapestry).

Further information regarding key workers/vulnerable pupils can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Parents of children who accessed a school place during the lockdown will be contacted tomorrow regarding places for the rest of the week. If your child did not attend during lockdown but you feel that they are eligible, please email [j.gill200@stp-consett.co.uk](mailto:j.gill200@stp-consett.co.uk) outlining your employment and contact details.

I apologise unreservedly for the short notice. Please be assured, closing the school was not at all what the Governing Body and I wanted for the start of 2021 and indeed, up until lunchtime I was looking forward to welcoming children back to school as planned on the 4<sup>th</sup> January and getting them back into normal routines and starting the year on a positive and hopeful footing but, in light of reduced staffing capacity in key operational areas, I cannot guarantee the safety and wellbeing of the children at all times.

I would like to thank you for your continuing support and cooperation during these challenging times and wish you and your family a safe 2021.

With very best wishes,

Mrs Jennifer M Gill  
Headteacher