



Date: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent / Carer

**Important information regarding pupil attendance: January 2021**

Firstly, can I take this opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year. I want to thank you for the very supportive approach you have taken during these exceptionally challenging times. I also want to acknowledge the difficulties many of you are experiencing at the moment juggling work and other commitments with supporting your child with their education.

The latest available data shows increasing cases of Covid across the country and indeed, here in Trafford. We know we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of the virus. We need to reduce contact with others outside of our homes and ensure we are social distancing, wear face coverings, maintain handwashing, be aware of Covid symptoms and get a test if symptoms develop. That is why the Government has given clear guidance on restricting attendance in schools during this latest national lockdown. This guidance makes it clear that the most important contribution you can make is to keep your child at home if you can safely do so.

Whilst schools have been formally closed since Tuesday 5th January, they continue to support your child, both academically and pastorally. We stress, for public health reasons, schools are only open to vulnerable children and young people and the children of key workers. The provision they are putting in place is an emergency measure. Our schools have been working exceptionally hard to manage the requests for places for vulnerable pupils and pupils of key workers and if you have requested a place, you will have been notified of the outcome.

The Government has updated and published a list of those parent / carers who are deemed to be key workers as well as pupils who are considered vulnerable. The guidance also states that where possible schools should keep group sizes small and keep the numbers accessing school as low as possible. Any additional space available where there are lower numbers of pupils attending should be used wherever possible to maximise the distance between pupils and between staff and other people.

Schools are still required to assess the risks and implement proportionate control measures to limit the transmission of coronavirus. As such they need to limit the number of pupils on site to maintain a safe environment. Therefore, each provision will have to make an individual decision based upon their staffing capacity and location. It is critical to note, therefore, that this provision should only be taken up if there are no other alternatives and we would ask you to consider this where possible.

Schools are ensuring they have a robust remote learning offer for those pupils who will remain at home and will work with families for those who do not have access to this on-line provision.

Whilst I recognise this remains a challenging time for all, I thank you for your patience and ask that you support our school staff and each other by respecting the decisions that have been made, particularly if you have not been able to access a school place.

Yours sincerely

*K. Samples*

**Karen Samples**  
**Director of Standards, Quality and Performance**