

The Federation of Heathfield and St Francis Schools



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Executive Headteacher
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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you and your families are staying safe and well.

I apologise sincerely for not being able to get back to you any sooner but the Government's announcement was a surprise to us all last night. We had put all of our energies yesterday into planning a return for the vast majority of pupils today but of course, the news that we were once again in a full lockdown situation has completely changed this.

Hampshire Local Authority is working with the Department for Education to try to develop clarification around what this new lockdown means for special schools. As yet, this has not been forthcoming and we have been advised that this will take another few days. What we do not wish to do is put in a plan for the next few days, which then needs to be changed. Therefore, in order to ensure that we have a viable, sustainable and consistent offer which fully supports all pupils with their continuing safeguarding and education, whether on or off the school site, we are going to need more time to plan for this in detail and to make all the necessary preparations.

In addition, we need to set up and implement lateral flow Covid testing for our staff community as an important safety measure. We have further training from Hampshire Local Authority on this tomorrow.

Whilst I know this will cause disruption and frustration, for which I cannot apologise enough, we are going to exercise the flexibility afforded to us under the Contingency Framework to remain closed for face-to-face teaching for the rest of this week. Teachers are working very hard as I write this to upload learning onto the website for you to complete with your child this week, if you wish.

We will be in touch with you over the next few days to discuss provision for critical worker families and for those whom we know need face-to-face provision the most. As a basis, we will be using the information we have from last academic year to make some decisions around this. All new families have already been contacted by staff. Please can I ask you to check your emails regularly for updates.

Once again, I apologise for this situation and please can I assure you that the senior team are working as hard as they can to implement a plan to support the safety and well-being of our federation community.

Thank you and please take care

Yours sincerely

Rachel Weldon

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