



13<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent, Carers and Families,

As everyone comes to the end of a very challenging 10 days since the announcement of an unexpected lockdown, we want to wish all of our families a very warm return to school (virtual or face to face) for the Spring Term.

Firstly, can I take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to every family for working with us. Thank you for your timely responses to emails, Class Dojo messages, google forms and for your patience. This information has been vital to help inform our decision making as we try to support the government's actions to prevent the spread of the virus in our communities and make our best endeavours to provide education for all pupils.

Currently, we are still managing reduced staffing capacity, not because of union guidance, this has been retracted as a result of reduction in pupil numbers in schools. We have 33% of pupil facing staff unavailable to attend the workplace, these include staff that are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, self isolating or are unwell, COVID or none COVID related.

Therefore, we are running two forms of our school, 73 pupils with face to face provision and 172 pupils with virtual provision.

We have had to make difficult decisions about who we could provide onsite provision to and could not accommodate all parental requests, we recognise that guidance stipulates that all pupils with EHC plans are deemed as vulnerable, we also have a responsibility to ensure we fulfil our health and safety obligations. We have prioritised places based on the other categories defined through national guidance and informed discussion, we also prioritised pupils of Critical Workers.

We will be contacting individual parents to have further discussions about how we can work together where a place has been requested but not yet provided on site, we hope that through co-production we can ensure pupils' needs are met.

#### Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

The current guidance for children and young people who are deemed clinically extremely vulnerable is not to attend their school setting and to remain at home as much as possible. We have contacted parents of pupils that previously fell into this category but please ensure you keep us updated if the medical advice you receive differs.

#### Family Support

We continue to be in close contact with Social Care and the Children with Disabilities Team in order to respond to any difficulties and share information

Our email that you can use if you feel you need further support or have specific questions is

#### The Chiltern School

Kingsland Campus, Parkside Drive  
Houghton Regis, Beds, LU5 5PX  
Tel: 01582 866972

Beech Road Campus, Beech Road  
Dunstable, Beds, LU6 3LY  
Tel: 01582 667106

Headteacher: Lisa Leonard  
Email: [school@chiltern.beds.sch.uk](mailto:school@chiltern.beds.sch.uk)



still available [familysupport@chiltern.beds.sch.uk](mailto:familysupport@chiltern.beds.sch.uk). We may not have all the answers or be able to solve your problem, our Safeguarding Leads will access this daily and liaise with relevant professionals to ensure you are signposted to the right agency if necessary.

#### Lateral Flow testing.

The government introduced lateral flow testing for schools. The test is completed once a week with all staff that are onsite that provide consent. It takes approximately 9 hours to currently test the staff onsite and we have 12 staff members who are now trained to do this. This week we have completed 89 lateral flow tests, all of which were negative. Staff will be tested weekly.

If we have a positive test result, the next step is to complete a full PCR COVID-19 test external. In this case we will ask pupils in the class to self isolate for 10 days as they will have had close contact with a confirmed positive.

We are not currently testing Phase 2 or 3 pupils (Pupils aged 11 or over). Once we feel we have a robust and safe way to manage this we will start to test those pupils whom we have consent for if they are onsite. We will liaise with you before this happens.

#### Free School Meals

The school will be responsible for the provision of free school meals during the lock-down period. We will continue to use the voucher scheme as feedback on this has been positive. Pupils on site will continue to receive their lunch at school.

You may not have thought you qualify for Free School Meals, however, it is worth investigating. If you are, it means you are entitled to a voucher each week that we can send out electronically. If you need help or want to find out if you meet the free school meals eligibility criteria, please call us on 0300 300 8306.

When you call to apply for free school meals, please have the following information ready: National Insurance numbers and dates of birth for you and your partner. dates of birth for your children.

#### Annual Reviews

Working with the SEND team and other professionals, we are currently arranging Annual Reviews virtually, where this is practical for all attendees. You will be contacted directly to discuss the best way to do this.

#### Virtual School Resources

If your child does not have access to a device at home and you have not already informed the school please do so. Please bear with us as we are working through the responses as quickly as possible. Families will be contacted individually where we are able to supply equipment. We are working with various charities to enable us to purchase more devices.

We are also looking at providing other physical resources (Paper, paint, shaving foam) that

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you may need to support engagement in virtual learning. Pathway Leaders will communicate with you regarding this.

Finally

We understand that this is a really worrying time for everyone and thank you for your patience, support and continued kindness. We are all having to dig deep to keep going.

We will be providing families with updates as they become available. Please keep safe and well.

Kind regards,

Lisa Leonard  
Headteacher



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