

ABBAY ACADEMIES TRUST
Executive Headteacher: Mrs S J Moore

5th January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

Happy New Year! This isn't quite my usual first letter of the new year but following on from my letter yesterday evening, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the many parents and carers who have sent supportive and understanding emails. Although there had been some speculation about primary schools being closed, you will appreciate that even on Sunday the Prime Minister stressed that he would not be closing primary schools. To this extent we had been planning for a full reopening and are extremely devastated that we have not been able to return to school as planned today. Following the U-turn on this decision made at 8pm yesterday, we did act swiftly and got a letter to you by 9:38pm. We must apologise that ParentMail was overwhelmed and indeed other local primary schools were in the same situation. This is why we copy important information onto our school Facebook pages and websites, so that you receive it in several ways.

As you know, the government directive is for you to work from home if you can and for primary schools to be closed, with the exception of vulnerable and keyworker children. If you feel you need your child/ren to access keyworker provision, please contact us. Thank you to those of you who have done this in a measured and thoughtful manner. We are being as flexible as we possibly can and are considering all personal circumstances. Can I ask that if you have any worries or concerns you do not post them on social media and instead contact school directly.

In March 2020, Abbey Academies Trust Senior Leadership Team spent a great deal of time investigating the viability of keeping all three schools open for those identified groups. I am sure you will agree that the health and safety of our pupils and staff is of the utmost importance. I appreciate your disappointment and worries that our keyworker and vulnerable children provision is at Bourne Abbey, if your child does not attend this school. I can though reassure you that this worked very well during the last COVID-19 school closure. The number of parents/carers who have requested places for keyworker and vulnerable provision is minimal at both Colsterworth and Bourne Elsea Park and therefore to have all the children in one school helps us ensure we can stay open and allow staff to have time working from home.

The children's mental health and well-being is paramount and we can assure you that there will always be staff members at Bourne Abbey that the children recognise from their own school. As during the last school closure, staff from all three schools have produced a teaching rota. Members of the Senior Leadership Team will be in school more than other staff to ensure we have safeguarding leaders, SENCOs etc. at all times and to be available at the start and end of each school day.

We have worked hard these last few months on improving our online learning provision, which the children can now access through Seesaw. Your child's class teacher will start each day with a personal message outlining the day's learning. This will then be followed by the remote learning resources for the day. Teachers and teaching assistants will also give feedback throughout the day. We are proud that we are able to continue to offer our outstanding, creative curriculum which will include PE, Music and French. We would urge you to contact us via email if you have any concerns regarding home learning and we are here to support you and the children with this. We know it will be important for the children to be in contact with their teacher during this lockdown whilst they are not in school. If you feel your child needs some extra reassurance or contact with their teacher, again please do contact us. Our mental health and well-being first aiders will be on hand to support children throughout this current school closure both at home and in school. Remember we have links on our websites to support children and families with their well-being.

Please can I once again reassure you that we always keep communication channels open to support families over safeguarding and SEND issues whilst our schools are closed. We have liaised with our school meals provider, Ideal School Meals, and packed lunches/grocery packs will be available for pupils who currently receive free school meals (FSM). Mrs Jill Bates will send out further information shortly. We have updated our 'live' COVID-19 risk assessment and will continue to update you with events as they unfold and as we get further directives and advice from Public Health and the government whilst we are closed.

We are currently collating keyworker and vulnerable children numbers so we can prepare the registers and will send out further information about arrangements later today.

Thank you for all your support and understanding as we once again navigate through these uncertain times. As I said to you all in April, 'We will get through this together because of extremely skilled, capable and enthusiastic staff, fantastic and resilient children who rise to challenges and truly understand our 'take care' ethos on so many levels and parents/carers and trustees/governors who so readily contribute to the life of our schools and wider communities'.

Please may I take this opportunity to say you are all in my prayers. I will continue to be available at Bourne Abbey for all of you.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Moore', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Moore
Executive Headteacher
National Leader of Education