

**St Andrew's Church of England Primary School**  
**Crescent Avenue**  
**Over Hulton**  
**Bolton**  
**BL5 1EN**



**Head Teacher: Mr Simon Charnock**

5/2/21

Dear Parents and carers,

We are writing following last week's news that schools will not be able to re-open for all children after the half term but we will hopefully be able to re-open fully from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March (a decision to be made during the review on 22<sup>nd</sup> February). Although this is not the news that we wished for, it is still another step towards a return to some form of normality. We remain buoyed by lots of positive news about vaccination rates, current decreasing infection rates in the area and the promises of an increasing number of viable vaccines that continue to become available to those who are most vulnerable.

However, as we reach 5 weeks of lockdown since January, circumstances remain tough. We are all weary of the restrictions and many are understandably anxious. We still have at least another 4 weeks of the children not being in school and receiving face to face interaction with their teachers or the crucial face to face social contact with their friends and peers which they all so desperately need.

We also very much understand how very difficult parents and carers are finding it to support home learning whilst working from home and running their family home, each having a plethora of individual circumstances that are too numerous to begin to mention. Nevertheless, we have always said throughout sustained periods of home learning over the last 11 months, that you should do what you can with your children and would again like to reassure you of the following:-

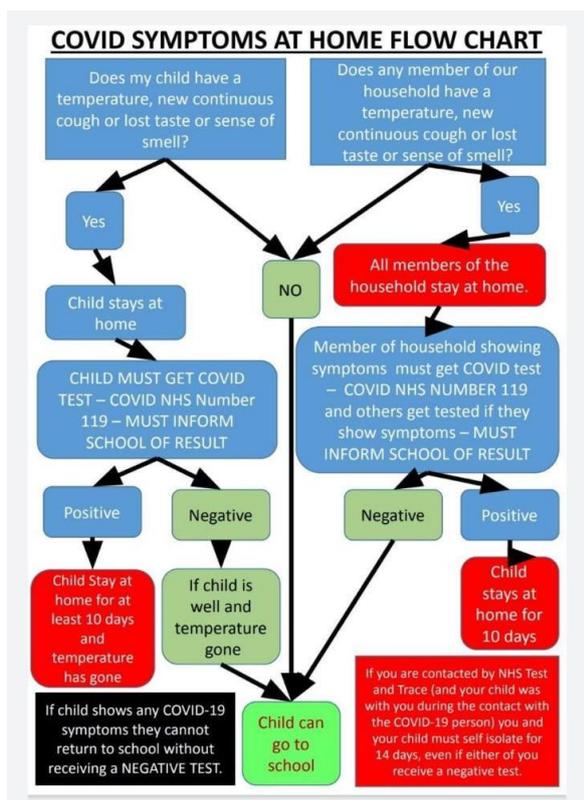
- We hope that you understand that there is no expectation for you to be teachers. We know that you are doing what you can to support your children with their learning whilst they are at home. When all our children return to school, many are likely to need to again 'catch up'. We will address this. This is what we are here for. We saw lots of success in last term's catch up sessions – these will be re-evaluated and amended to ensure any knowledge that the children need, will be addressed with the resources that we have available.
- Please don't put yourselves or your children under pressure to engage in every aspect and task set for home learning. We are very pleased with the uptake of the daily online sessions and hope that the children are finding them reassuring and supportive. We understand that there will be days that you and your children feel overwhelmed. Please just do what you can and fit in the school work, when you can, around your own circumstances and commitments. The mental health and wellbeing of the children, yourself and your family must come first. We will, however, continue to contact families should there be sustained periods without engagement just to see if there is anything that we can help with.
- If your children become upset or are struggling to engage during their learning, please stop and take a break. Do something fun or relaxing to change the mood and re-motivate. There are lots of ideas on our Facebook page or on the Wellbeing page on our website – look especially for the Non-screen / Screen break activities in the 'downloads' – it may not be



English or Maths but there are lots of great educational and learning activities to engage in. If you feel like you can try again later, then do. If not, don't worry – there's always tomorrow.

- Celebrate and reward yourselves for your achievements, however small – even if it's not what you set out to achieve or as much as you intended to do. This will help embed resilience and even accept criticism when it comes constructively – it is okay to get things wrong when we try to correct the mistakes we make, so we then work towards getting them right.
- With this in mind, please remember that we try to develop children's independence. We cannot be expected to help them with everything. The work submitted is hopefully their best and we don't expect perfection. We will endeavour to do our best to support the children with their work and help them understand their mistakes.
- Please focus on what you can do, rather than what you can't, in your circumstances and try not to compare yourself with how well other families and friends are doing. We all have different circumstances and shouldn't compare with everyone else.
- Finally, remember that we are available to help as best we can if you ask for help. There are numerous ways to contact school – please do so.

We continue to be very fortunate to have not needed to close any of our class bubbles down this term ("touch wood") but could we continue to remind everyone:-



- When dropping off your child, please always maintain social distancing, standing two metres apart if you are waiting. At pick-up, maintain a 2m distance from anyone else on the school premises and keep the school exits clear so that our children can exit safely.
- Please could Reception parents wear a face covering or mask when picking up the children from outside the Reception class doors.
- If your child displays any symptoms which may be covid-19 related, please keep them at home and inform the school, booking a PCR test for them.

Despite the anticipated return to school for all children, we would continue to request that parents and carers also follow guidance issued from the DfE. Significantly, this guidance states: *“Your child’s school or college will speak to you to identify whether your child needs to attend. You should keep your child at home if you can...”*



The guidance on critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings clarifies that parents and carers who are critical workers **should keep their children at home if they can** because, *“we now need to use every lever at our disposal to reduce all our social contacts wherever possible.”*

The Bolton Public Health advice continues to be *‘act like you have it’* when considering interaction with others. The case rates amongst all age groups have exponentially increased in Bolton over recent weeks.

### **Health, Behaviour and Well-being**

Please also remember that we still have the [pastoral@standrewsoh.bolton.sch.uk](mailto:pastoral@standrewsoh.bolton.sch.uk) address if you have any emotional or mental health issues that you would like to share or need help with. Staff accessing these emails are Level 2 qualified in Children and Adult Mental Health First Aid.

Please continue to take good care, stay safe and stay well. We are still missing the children so it is very much appreciated when we see them during either, or both, of their Teams sessions. Again, please do not be surprised if the children’s teacher contacts you if we don’t see you online for a few days – we will endeavour to make sure everything is as well as it can be with you at home.

Let’s continue to pray that we will be back together soon.

Kind Regards

Simon Charnock

Headteacher

