

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Happy New Year. I hope you have all managed to enjoy your tier 4 Christmas as much as possible and are ready for the new school term.

As you may be aware, the NEU and Unison (teacher and support staff unions) advised their members yesterday to consider their statutory right, under the Employment Rights Act 1996, to work in an environment that doesn't pose a "real risk of serious and imminent danger". The unions were concerned around the increased R-rate, the new coronavirus variant (and lack of data around this) and the increased infection rates amongst young people. The NAHT (school leaders union) has also initiated a legal challenge against the Department for Education.

In the absence of definitive evidence from the government of the scientific evidence on which school opening is based and with the lack of robust data at this time about the new variant, we are unable to provide sufficient reassurances to resolve all of our staff members' concerns about the safety of children, their families and their own safety, if we were to fully reopen whilst in in tier 4.

The health and safety of our children, their families, staff and our wider community continues to be our first priority. Therefore, it is with regret that our risk assessment at this time concludes that **Carville Primary School will only open for the children of key workers and those deemed as vulnerable** according to the DfE's wide definition - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>. This assessment will be reviewed as new data and guidance emerges and will take place no later than Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January.

Remote learning will be in place for all children not attending school through the use of Seesaw and CGP maths and English books, which can be collected from the school office on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January (a text will be sent tomorrow explaining pick-up times and Seesaw login queries).

Our 'Returning to School' booklet, sent in December and attached with this letter again, details all the arrangements. The only changes are that Breakfast Club will be for 'Key worker' children only (those that need to drop-off early to get to work) and that class numbers will be limited to 12 pupils initially. [Talktoteacher@carvilleprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:Talktoteacher@carvilleprimaryschool.co.uk) can still be used for non-essential contact with the class teacher and 0191 2342676 can be used as usual.

We hope that you appreciate that this is a fast-moving situation and we are being asked to make decisions with very little notice or guidance. We are also aware that there will be a further

government announcement at 8pm that may change these arrangements further. We recognise that these changes may create difficulties for some people and warmly encourage you to contact school if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your continued messages of understanding and support and for working with us through this difficult time in the best interests of our Carville Family.

Yours sincerely,



Mr R Harker  
Headteacher



Mrs K Ellis  
Chair of Governors

