



The Bishop Konstant Catholic Academy Trust

Learning Communities, Inspired by Faith

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Dear Parent/Carers,

I hope despite the many challenges we are all facing that you and your families are safe and well.

On Monday 4th January, the Prime Minister announced a new National Lockdown which included the closure of schools to all except vulnerable pupils and pupils whose parents are Key Workers. During his address, the Prime Minister acknowledged that this decision had been taken due to the alarming rate at which the new Covid-19 variant is spreading. Scientists have also confirmed that the new variant is between 50 and 70 per cent more transmissible. This worrying development comes at a time when hospital admissions have risen by a third in the past week, surpassing 27,000 and are 40% higher than at the peak of the virus in April 2020. Infections are rising in all areas of the country and tragically over a thousand deaths have been recorded in each of the past two days.

The Prime Minister confirmed that the decision to close schools has been taken because "they act as vectors for transmission, causing the virus to spread between households." It is perfectly clear that whilst children are largely unaffected by this disease, they can nonetheless spread it between themselves and on into their household. With this information in mind, it is perfectly clear that the safest place for your child is at home. Not only is it the safest place, it is also essential that they remain at home in order to reduce mixing and the transmission of this disease between households.

For some of you, we understand that your work is of critical importance and that this takes you out of the house where your work is essential in the fight against Covid-19. However, if you qualify as a Key Worker, but can manage to have your children at home, I would urge you to do this and let your child's school know as soon as possible. Government guidance published on 7th January supports this point... "Parents and Carers who are Key Workers should keep their children at home if they can."

Unlike the lockdown in March 2020, schools are now legally required to provide Remote Learning. This additional requirement, combined with keeping schools open for vulnerable pupils means that there is a significant additional pressure on schools. All staff are working incredibly hard to provide the very best quality of education they can online, as well teaching pupils in school, undertaking remote pastoral work, preparing lessons and many other duties. Pupils will experience a combination of live and recorded lessons in order to maximise opportunities for learning. Should you have questions or concerns about your child's school online learning offer, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your child's school.

Once again, my plea to you is this: the best action for you to take for your child, yourself and the whole community is to keep your child at home and access Remote Learning if it is at all possible to do so.

Thank you for your understanding in what I recognise is a very difficult situation for everyone and will cause considerable disruption to your personal and working lives.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Fitton CEO