

5th January 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

As you will know, the Prime Minister announced at 8pm last night a national lockdown in England with immediate effect. As you can imagine, this gave our schools very little time to prepare, but they have all worked incredibly hard last night to put provision in place. I know, like me, you will be incredibly grateful for their work.

Thank you to you as well for changing your childcare arrangements at such late notice and working co-operatively with our schools – your support is much appreciated. I know that these are difficult times for us all and I am heartened by the support we have been able to give each other so far. I know schools will continue to work closely with you to ensure your child is well supported throughout the lockdown.

This latest announcement and the restrictions imposed are in response to significant increases in confirmed COVID-19 cases, rising death rates and mounting pressures on the NHS. The full list of restrictions can be found on the [Government's website](#) and updates are also available via Knowsley News. Locally our figures have been increasing at a significant pace and we will all need to follow the rules if we are to bring the rates down and save lives.

The Prime Minister announced a series of stricter measures to prevent the spread of the virus – the latest national lockdown includes the following components:

- People should stay at home unless shopping for essentials, working (if unable to work from home), exercising (not recreation), seeking medical assistance (such as getting a COVID-19 test) or escaping domestic abuse.
 - Clinically extremely vulnerable residents should recommence “shielding” – people in this category will receive a letter about what this means for them.
 - Primary and secondary schools and colleges across England will move to remote learning from 5 January 2021, except for vulnerable children and the children of key workers who should still attend schools in person.
 - Childcare via Early Years settings can still be accessed.
- Examinations will not take place this summer, so the Department for Education will put alternative arrangements in place; your school will provide further details when the DFE have shared their plans.
- Free school meals will continue.
- More devices will be provided to support remote education.

As you know, government have indicated that the current arrangements will be in place until at least the February half-term holidays. Your school will keep you updated on the arrangements for those students attending school and those that will be required

to access remote learning. As you can imagine this is a busy time for our schools so please continue to be patient with them as they develop their plans. I know that this places additional pressures on you as a family, but our schools will do all that they

can to support you through this challenging time.

The Prime Minister indicated that pupils who are eligible for free school meals (pupils that have been means tested rather than receiving the universal infant free school meal offer) will not be disadvantaged in this current lockdown. Whilst we are awaiting further details on how this support will be provided, your school is currently working with their school meals provider and they will be in contact with you directly as soon as they can about the plans for meal provision.

Examinations scheduled for the summer term have been cancelled. The Department for Education is currently working with OFQUAL to determine how student assessments will be made. Your school will provide further details on this when they can. In the meantime, students should continue with their studies either through their school-based offer or via the remote learning packages available to them. Students who are concerned about this should contact their teacher.

Hopefully these latest measures will have an impact on our infection rates, and we will be able to welcome all pupils back to the classroom later in the Spring.

Thank you for your continued support once again and remember to follow the advice – follow the rules, stay at home and stay safe.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Albertina". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill Albertina

Assistant Executive Director (Education & Early Help)