



Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School

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03/01/2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I know many of you will have been following the announcements about schools opening again at the start of the new term. This will have added to your anxiety in these deeply anxious times.

I have today been in meetings with the Local Authority, our senior team and Vicky Etheridge (our Chair of Governors). Over the past few days, there has been growing uncertainty about our ability to open safely and today we have made the extremely difficult decision that school will not be opening until Wednesday 6th January.

I have taken the decision to close the school for an additional day so that there will be no children in school on Monday (previously set as an Inset day) or Tuesday.

At this point, the majority of staff are following guidance from their union not to attend the work place, as they believe it presents a serious and imminent danger to their health and safety. This is not a decision anyone has taken lightly and there have been a number of factors everyone has considered when making this choice.

Therefore, we will open for the children of Critical Workers and Vulnerable children on Wednesday 06/01/2020, this provision will likely continue until 15/01/2020 by which time the unions and government officials will have hopefully reviewed their respective guidance.

By closing on Monday and Tuesday, we will be able to ascertain how staff most effectively deployed and gain vital information from yourselves about the numbers of children we can safely plan for. We will be asking you via Parentmail to update our information on critical workers status and who is classified as a vulnerable child as guidance surrounding this has changed since the summer.

This decision has come very late in the day considering your children were due to return to school on Tuesday, for this I can only apologise. We are again faced with situations which are out of our control and the Local Authority have made it clear that Head Teachers in Norfolk have to make the best decisions possible considering their own schools circumstances.

We understand that this may cause considerable disruption to many of you and you will be naturally concerned about the education of your children. I understand that there are many parents that will want to keep their children safe by choosing to complete home learning because of their own personal circumstances. We will support you in doing this and maintain our remote learning as published on our school website until such time that we are able to welcome all staff and children back in to school safely. Day 1 of remote learning will begin on Tuesday 5th January.

There will be many questions following this letter and I hope to answer those over the next few days once I am able to meet with staff to discuss concerns and plan for the safe return of everyone back to Fairstead



Community Primary and Nursery School. The school office will be open tomorrow. Alternatively, you can email office@fairstead.norfolk.sch.uk and we will get a response to you as soon as is possible.

Following this letter, once I have had the chance to meet with all staff and review the week ahead, I will update you all with further information.

Thank you for your continued support and patience.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Farthing

Headteacher

