



St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL

Tel: 020 7226 4906

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Interim Head of School: Mrs Alice Shaw

Interim Executive Head: Mrs Tonnie Read

14th December, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

On Friday, the Chief Medical Officer announced that the self-isolation period would reduce from 14 days to 10 days. However, at St John's, we are in an extreme and high-risk position. We have almost 100% of the school isolating, and the number of positive cases continues to rise each day extending the isolating period. To date, 20% of our staff have tested positive for COVID-19.

Therefore, I am writing to confirm that **St John's will remain closed for the remainder of this term**. We will continue to provide remote learning for the children on Google classroom and class teachers will remain contactable to parents through Class Dojo.

In addition to staff shortages and increasing cases of COVID-19 amongst pupils and staff, there are other factors that we must consider and have in place to open again safely. Last week we worked with Public Health England to review and update our risk assessment to protect us from being in this position again, this included ordering and installing new protective equipment in the school hall. These works will be completed in time for the school to open safely in January.

We know how crucial it is for children to be in school and we have worked relentlessly throughout the pandemic to ensure that the school remained open. Through completing rigorous risk assessments, implementing dear and thorough protective measures and with the support of the school community, we have kept the school open and avoided an outbreak of COVID-19 until now. Reducing the risk of transmission along with the safety of pupils and staff must remain a priority.

At 11am today an emergency Islington Headteacher's briefing was called with Islington Local Authority and Public Health England. All Islington schools have been asked **to close from Wednesday 16th December** and to **reopen on Monday 11th of January**. Remote learning will continue to be provided to all those at home during this period.





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All Islington schools to close from Wednesday 16th to Monday 11th January 2021.

Vulnerable children and critical worker children: although schools have been asked to remain open and provide **childcare** for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. For the reasons outlined above, St John's will not open to vulnerable children and critical worker children until **Tuesday January 5th** (4th January is an INSET day).

All other children will be provided with remote learning during this time until they can return to school on Monday 11th January.

Critical workers: the definition of critical workers is '*parents whose work is **critical** to the coronavirus response*'. The purpose of closing the schools is to reduce the amount of virus in the community because of a huge surge in London cases. Therefore, we are asking all parents who identify as critical workers to **consider all other forms of childcare before sending your child into school**. If you can keep your child at home for this period, please do.

Islington and Public Health England are currently updating the guidance and expect to send out the updates and communication to schools by 2pm. If there is any extra information, we will send it out to the parent community.

We will continue to update you as and when we receive further information.

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding.

Many thanks

Mrs Read

