



Mercia School
Carter Knowle Road
Sheffield
S7 2DY

Telephone 0114 5539080
enquiries@merciaschool.com
www.merciaschool.com

Headteacher: Mr Dean Webster
Chair of Governors: Mrs Rhona Dodds

Our ref: DW/GD

05 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure, like me, you all watched the 8pm address by the Prime Minister, in which he placed England into another National Lockdown.

It is clear that the new variant is spreading at alarming speed. Since I last wrote to you, a week ago, Covid patients have increased by a third nationally. Therefore, he said if this action is not taken, NHS capacity could be overwhelmed within 21 days. This is simply a position we all must work together to avoid.

All schools are to remain closed and move to remote learning from Wednesday 6 January. I am so sorry but we cannot open as planned. I know this will be deeply upsetting for the huge majority of our pupils and for many parents. I am acutely aware that there is no real impactful substitute for face-to-face teaching, but we will endeavour to give your child **continuity and support** in their studies. These next few weeks will be difficult, please be assured we will be in regular contact. As ever we are always here to support you, if required.

From Wednesday 6 January, your child is to work through their 'lesson booklets' that they have taken home at the end of term. They are to follow their normal timetable as much as possible, studying for 5 lessons per day. Your child's timetable is in their diary. Everyday should start with 30minutes of reading. To ensure your child is working hard please quiz them. If pupils do not test their knowledge, research suggests they lose it from their memory.

To supplement 'booklet work', from Wednesday 6 January we will upload online seminars to ensure your child has support in their work. I hope this blended interactive approach helps your child to engage in their studies as much as they would in school. The seminars are not live and can be downloaded at any point in the day. I know this will help families with limited computer access, who must work from home and have other children.

All pupils know how to log onto our ICT systems and have their password in their diary. I have attached a help sheet to this letter so you can also log into our seminars.

It is important that pupils do not indulge in binge time on their electronic devices such as gaming and use of mobile phone. Please ensure these are used in moderation - as a treat for good work. Please also monitor social media use to keep your child safe. **Pupils should exercise daily, and we will set a weekly exercise challenge.**

If you have any questions or queries about the work that has been set, please contact us at enquiries@merciaschool.com or pupils can email their teachers directly.

Extremely vulnerable children and those children of critical frontline workers are allowed in school *as a last resort*. Your child will be supervised by a member of staff at a desk. They will work through their booklets. Unfortunately, they will not have lessons at this point as teachers will be uploading seminars and making wellbeing calls. If you need us as a last resort, please contact enquiries@merciaschool.com so we can share with you the detailed arrangements.

All the staff at Mercia understand the seriousness of the National Lockdown and the depressing implications for our families. I am devastated that we are yet again in this situation. Let's be positive and hope that this huge national effort and the simultaneous roll out of vaccines, allows us all to get back to normal as soon as possible.

In the words of the Prime Minister, now more than ever, we must pull together. Stay at home protect the NHS and save lives.

I will update you of any developments and will ensure communication is regular.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Webster'.

Mr D Webster
Headteacher