



Rainhill St Ann's CE Primary School
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 Headteacher: Mrs Laura Rynn



Always our best for God, each other and ourselves.

Sunday 10th January 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers

I hope my letter finds you and your family safe and well. Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and support last week, as well as for the over-whelming messages of support and praise for the school and staff. Secondly, I would like to congratulate everyone who is supporting their child with their home learning. Not only have the staff been extremely impressed by level of engagement, but also the quality and quantity of work the children are completing. I appreciate how difficult it is to educate children at home, and hope we are not in this situation for too long.

The reason I write over the weekend is to update you on some changes we are making from tomorrow following our first week of critical worker provision and remote education for everyone at home. Unfortunately, even after just our first week, we have seen staff and pupils having to self-isolate due to coming into contact with someone who has tested positive for the virus, and this is not been helped by the volume of people who remain on site. The risk of spread of the virus is at very high levels. Week commencing 9.12.20 to 15.12.20 - 223 people in St Helens tested positive for the virus (123.5 per 100,000), however week commencing 30.12.20 to 5.1.21 - 1071 people tested positive (593.1 per 100,000), with the rate being especially high in the Rainhill ward. The situation is all the more concerning with the new variant now being in the North West.

Currently we have 49% of pupils (209) on site either because the child is vulnerable or because they have one or more parents/ carers who are a critical worker. During the lockdown in March 2020, when rates were not as high as now, we never had more than 20 pupils on site (5%). I feel it is my moral duty to draw your attention to this. I appreciate in some instances this is because more industries have been added to the critical worker list, and more businesses are continuing to operate, and haven't completely shut down. However, with increasing numbers of staff testing positive, this can not be allowed to continue. Large numbers of children in school means staff are at increased risk.

The advice schools received towards the very end of last week was, just because your child qualifies for a place in school, it doesn't mean it should be taken. The best place for children, for the sake of my staff, your family and the children themselves is at home. **Children should be at home unless it is absolutely critical that they are not.** If the reason for a child attending school is because it is difficult, at this time, this is not a reason when everyone needs to stay at home. This is our moral and civic duty when we are trying to fight a global pandemic. And don't forget, we are here, maybe not face to face, but remotely to support you and your child. We are at the other end of MStTeams, the phone and email. So, if your child is eligible for a place at school, but someone is at home, even working from home, to look after them, then please do not bring them to school at this time. The aim of closing schools at this time was to reduce the transmission, therefore the fewer children and adults we have in school, the more chance we have of achieving this.

In order to reduce numbers, we are introducing a tier system from tomorrow. This system has the full backing of the Three Saints Academy Trust and Directors and is being applied across all our schools. This will determine whether your child is still eligible for a place at school. The survey parents/ carers completed on Monday evening has been used to develop this system and identify who is now eligible for a place in school. This is in place from tomorrow. **Today parents who requested a place for their child at the school will receive a text to confirm if your child can or cannot attend school tomorrow and moving forward. Children who did not attend school this week, should continue to stay at home, although you will not receive a text.** Unfortunately, whilst we appreciate this is certainly not ideal and will disappoint some of our families, we would appreciate your understanding in why it has been necessary to introduce this system. A benefit of reducing number of pupils on site will mean however, that we have more staff available to deliver remote education. Parents/ carers whose child is no longer eligible for a place in school may wish to contact their employer to find out if they have the option of being furloughed for childcare purposes.





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The Tier System

| Tiering | Descriptor | Additional comment |
|---------|---|--|
| Tier 1 | Vulnerable children | <p>As identified by the government and those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child have an education, health and care (EHC) plan have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training') - those living in temporary accommodation - those who are young carers - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study) - care leavers - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health |
| Tier 2 | Single parent/ carer households where the one adult in the household in a critical worker and who is not working at home. | Even if the parent/ carer work is critical to the coronavirus response, if the parent/ carer is working at home, they should keep their children at home if they can. |
| Tier 3 | Parents/ carers where an adult in the household works in Health and Social Care. | This includes, but is not limited to, doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment. |

Once again, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and patience during this unprecedented time. We will continue to communicate with you regularly and keep you informed on school developments. Our staff look forward to supporting your child with their learning at home. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact school in the usual way. We will aim to respond to you a timely manner, but please bear with us, as it may take a little longer than usual.

Stay safe.

Mrs Rynn
 Headteacher

