



5th January 2021

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Alongside the letter from Mark Wilson, Chief Executive Officer at Wellspring Academy Trust, we thought it important that we also update parents with specific local information about the current school situation.

Today we found ourselves with 10 absent staff, which is around 25% of our staffing, along with a significant level of absence of students who have tested positive for Covid. As things stand, supply agencies have only managed to provide us with one person to cover these absences. The high levels of the Covid virus, the strain on the labour market and the remote location of the school presents us with a unique challenge.

I can assure you that we are doing everything in our power to keep classes open as much as possible. However, an SEMH special school needs high levels of specialist staffing. To try to open without experienced staff in place who have relationships with our students could be unsettling or even feel unsafe to students who need to feel safe and secure in their environment. Unfortunately, we have started the year with a couple of class closures and as Covid levels remain high locally, I am expecting a rolling programme of class closure for the next few weeks.

We have discussed this situation across the Trust and there are many schools opening this week with similar problems who are having to close classes. This is not ideal, but we will try to ensure the following:

- That we communicate closures early
- Avoid primary closures as much as possible
- Try to ensure that classes are open for at least four days a week
- Return to normal working as soon as possible

You can help us by ensuring your child does a lateral flow test twice weekly (We have test kits in school if you need one) and to not send your child to school if they have symptoms to avoid the spread of the virus. Vaccinations (first and second doses) are now available for all children over 12 and we would encourage everyone to be vaccinated.

As always, if you have any questions, do contact us at school.

Yours sincerely

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