



Phoenix St Peter Academy



23rd February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I thought I would write to you immediately after Boris Johnson's announcement in Parliament yesterday followed later in the evening by his Downing Street Briefing.

You will not be surprised to hear that I am delighted we can welcome back all children. It is likely there will be much speculation in the media, perhaps focussing on the thoughts of teaching unions, that schools may be put under pressure to make this work. Let me assure you we will do our utmost to make this work and I'm happily confident about Monday 8th March. Whilst there is still a view in some pockets of the country that schools are shut, we haven't been. We have remained open allowing access to some, though not all. Please accept that as a parent myself, I would not be putting my own safety in jeopardy by working in an unsafe environment. The school is a safe place and though we can never eliminate risk from any walk of life, as Professor Chris Whitty said, the evidence is now overwhelming that children must be in school.

Later today I will attend a REACH2 Headteacher Briefing on Zoom (where else!) to ascertain the picture across the Academy Trust. I will follow this up with staff meetings in school and ongoing meetings with members of the Senior Leadership Team this week. Meetings will not be exhaustive as actions are more important than words. The Department for Education has published a 67-page guidance document as well which I will have to read.

Without confirming anything just yet, it is likely we will return to staggered starts and retain bubbles. Lateral Flow Tests will continue to be available for school staff and we will aim to restart Breakfast Club as soon as children return and will take bookings later in the week. I will continue to update you throughout the next few days ahead of Monday 8th March.

Whilst I write, apologies for yesterday's IT problems. For once, the fault was not mine. There was an IT Upgrade and I am told "these things can take time." Credit to Miss Khatri who assisted the two IT Technicians who arrived on site yesterday to attempt to speed things up. Rightly or wrongly, we are so heavily reliant on IT and cloud-based systems; it can feel debilitating when technology presents a few glitches. I spent much of yesterday staring at an unresponsive screen, but I think we got there in the end. Please bear with us if glitches re-occur.

I will be in touch again later in the week once I know more and have plans in place, but this really is good news for us all.

With best wishes,

Rich Roberts

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