



SIR TOM FINNEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

Ribbleton Hall Drive, Preston, PR2 6EE

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Headteacher Mr Shaun Jukes PGCE, BPhil (special education)

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05.01.2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following last night's announcement by the Prime Minister, the country is entering another phase of National Lockdown. As such the guiding principle for schools is that they will be closed for most pupils and students at least until half term. **This applies equally to all schools.**

However, they will continue to remain 'open' for children of critical key workers as defined by the Government guidance and those risk assessed as the most vulnerable or in need. **Those remaining at home will be given home learning activities and have regular contact with a member of staff.**

In this context, we will be considering individual risk assessments using the criteria below to determine who should be attending school and will be communicating that information to parents/families as soon as decisions are made throughout the course of today and tomorrow.

The priority individuals using this risk assessment approach are:

1. Those children who have at least one of their parents in the household listed as an essential key worker (*according to the government definition of essential key workers, please refer to the Gov.uk/coronavirus website*).
2. Those children who have a safeguarding concern or social care input and it is agreed with social worker and family or residential settings that it would be safer and in the best interests of the child to be attending school.
3. Those children where it is deemed, via a risk assessment agreed between school and family, that it is safer and in the child's best interests to be attending school.
4. Those whose families still have concerns and feel it is simply safer for their child to remain at home for the foreseeable future. (*Currently there will be no penalties in place for any family who want their child to remain at home, because they feel it is the safest place to be*).



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It is clear from the PM's message that Lockdown 3.0 is because of the increased transmission within community settings of the new strain of the virus **therefore, it is paramount that the principle of 'Stay at home to be safe, if it is in the child's best interests' applies more than ever.** This is particularly the case for those who have been recognised as being:

1. Classed as clinically extremely vulnerable eg. With a pre-existing serious medical condition.
2. Those who may have a family member in this critically vulnerable group and may be shielding
3. Those showing significant signs fear and anxiety; our experience highlights this is prevalent within those young people presenting with ASD or who have significant mental and emotional health concerns.

In order for school to remain 'open' for those identified we continue to review and adapt the pre-existing Premises, Organisational and Operational risk assessments and will be reliant on staff numbers being available to meet the needs, demands and challenges of those attending. This approach will continue to support the methodology which determines how many young people can attend in order to maintain as risk-safe an environment as possible.

However, I must stress that no environment, particularly in a special school, can guarantee a 100% risk/virus free environment, we can only take guidance and advice and put in specific measures to support working toward this.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'B. Billington'.

Mrs B BILLINGTON
Deputy Headteacher



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