



BURLINGTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mrs P Utting

020 8942 2687

admin@bjs.rbksch.org

www.burlingtonj.kingston.sch.uk

Burlington Road · New Malden · Surrey · KT3 4LT

Thursday 14th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you so much for your patience and for bearing with us through all the changes over the past 2 weeks.

Last Friday afternoon, the government published yet further guidelines regarding attendance at school:

"The government is taking every possible measure to reduce cases in the community and protect the NHS. It means at the moment the majority of school and college students should be at home. We are aware of reports of schools and colleges having more pupils in attendance this week than during the last period. ...We encourage parents to consider the spirit of the lockdown when making their decision."

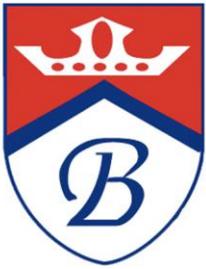
Following the latest announcements and clarification around the government guidance with regard to keyworker provisions, I would like to take this opportunity to explain the difficulties we are facing with the current allocation of places.

The rate of transmission across Kingston and surrounding boroughs remains high, and coupled with the concerns around the increased rate of transmission of the new strain, this results in a greater risk for all children and staff on site. Sadly we were forced to close some class bubbles last term. We also have members of staff who have become ill from COVID, some are still not fully recovered. We have also had to close a key worker bubble last week due to a positive case in school.

To put this further into context, we now have five times the number of pupils (and therefore more staff working with them) in school than we did in March 2020 when the transmission rates and case numbers were lower. More than anything I want every child back in school, but we must do whatever we can to minimise the virus' capacity to spread.

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On our initial survey we sent out before term started we did say we would review our offer on Friday 15th January. I now find events have overtaken us regarding the rapid spread of Covid and we will not be offering any more places in school until the rates reduce and further government guidance on the reopening of schools is announced. This may be many weeks away. If you are a **critical** key worker then we will continue to add you to our waiting list and do our best to support your front line role as much as possible.

Our other priority at the moment is to ensure that the learning of the children *not* in school is supported as best we can. We are speaking to other schools in the local area and revisiting our offer as I write. Please bear with us as we develop this - a letter about online learning is coming out to you all tomorrow. We will send out a survey in early February to review our remote learning offer asking you to comment on any changes we have made.

The decision to go into National lockdown has been thrust upon us all, and we will endeavour to make the best of the situation for all our children, whilst keeping the children and staff in school as safe as possible. If you feel that you qualify for a critical key worker place, with no one at home to look after your child, or that your child qualifies for a place under the vulnerable category, please email the office and we will put you on our waiting list.

As always, we thank you for your community spirit and support of the school, especially at this very difficult time.

Best wishes,

Mrs Pip Utting
Headteacher

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