

4 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Update following Prime Minister's Announcement at 8pm Monday 4 January 2021

As I'm sure you are aware we have now moved into a national lockdown until February half term. I think anyone who has been following the data- the dramatic increase in confirmed cases and deaths would have seen this coming.

As explained by the Prime Minister the new variant is causing significant complications due to the rapid rate of transmission and infection in our communities and as such the NHS is becoming overwhelmed.

As a headteacher my primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. Whilst I do recognise your children love school, and we certainly love working with them, I do feel we are all being compromised without due consideration for the safety of our school community.

This lockdown does seem to be much more alarming than the previous one in March and as such I genuinely am concerned that I can't keep everyone safe.

I am aware that the current guidance states that all children of critical key workers and vulnerable children, including those with an EHCP, should still attend their school. As all of the children at Barndale have an EHCP that would mean we still have full classrooms and every member of staff in.

The staff have worked hard last term to ensure that if we had to close any bubbles, we had remote learning prepared to ensure you were supported in engaging your child with fun activities and learning which would continue their development.

As it is being shared we are all much safer working and learning from home. We will still provide learning opportunities, resources and support to you so this can happen. I want to support you as much as possible and would like you to consider where the most appropriate place for your young person should be.

I have had several parents already take up our offer of home learning as they feel it is much safer for their child, their family and everyone's well being if they are at home. If you are wanting to do this can you let us know through our specific email address: covid@barndalehouse.northumberland.sch.uk. Obviously if you are wanting your child to stay at home you will need to contact your transport provider.

Can I just finish by saying a huge thank you for the support you show to the school and staff at Barndale House. We are all living and working through completely unknown times and I just hope we are quick to return to some normality. Stay safe!

Mark Phillips
Headteacher
Barndale House School