

Dear all

As the half term draws to close I want to update you on things at school. It is slightly a different letter than the one I had originally thought as we had a confirmed positive case for a member of staff this morning. We are supporting the member of staff concerned and all the relevant children's parents and carers as well as the staff have been informed. In addition to this letter are the official notification letters I am required to send to inform parents of the situation. Can I say when I have had to be in touch with any families it has been great to have had a really calm and measured conversation with everyone. You have made my job and that of the school so much easier.

We are always vigilant at school and I know you are at home and restricting who you see and being safe. As a school and community we must continue to remain vigilant. Personal hygiene, social distancing and being sensible, are all key parts of managing and keeping the pandemic at bay. The school has functioned so well since September and we have had attendance at the same levels as this time last year. The staff are brilliant at coping with the complexities around the situation and we are getting on well with the job of teaching and learning.

I texted you all yesterday to say we are having a dressing up day next Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> there is no particular theme so feel free to have your own personal take on the outfit. **On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November the school will be closed** to children and young people to allow us to undertake training for staff. This training is for Moving & Handling, Team Teach – which is our behavioural support programme and ensuring we have all our First Aid certificates up to date. I apologise for the inconvenience, it was just not possible to have the training at the start of term.

We are planning a week of activities starting on November 9<sup>th</sup> focussing on developing Communication across school. We will be sending home some more information about this after the half term holiday.

Yesterday we had our first discussion around Christmas and whilst it is going to be very different we will be having a lot of the usual activities including our Christmas dinner, Disco's and presents. There will be a chance for you to be involved as well and again I will send out some instructions on how to do this nearer the time.

Finally and related to any additional closures that may have to happen due to a positive case we have a Remote Learning Plan which I will be adding to the website and sending you information about next week. We have purchased iPads or Laptops for all our pupils and we have set up ways to ensure we can carry on with lessons *after* the Half Term holiday in the event of any form of closure. If we have to close these iPads or Laptops will be sent home with instructions on how to set them up and use them to keep in touch with us in school. This information will also be on our website. We want to ensure that learning and contacts are maintained whatever the situation we find ourselves in.

As always please take care. Keep safe.

*Paul Silvester*

Headteacher

Newman Special School