

Sunday 3rd January 2021.

**Important information regarding school closure as of Monday 4th January 2021 to all children except those who are vulnerable or children of critical workers.**

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I am sure a number of you are aware the National Education Union have written to Head Teachers informing them that their members have the right to refuse to attend the school setting to teach whole classes of children.

This morning I received a letter from a number of staff informing me that due to the current Tier 4 restrictions they do not feel it is safe or appropriate for them to teach whole classes of children.

Following this information, I have spent today in meetings with the NEU and have consulted with Paul Rickeard, the Director of Education for the Diocese and Audrey Kingham, Director of Education for NCC for advice and this letter has been formed as a result of consultation with the Newcastle Diocese, Local Authority and Governing Body of our school.

***Due to this ongoing situation, we can only open our school tomorrow and until further notice for critical worker children and those classed as vulnerable.***

You can check this at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

If you have a child who is within this category, please could you inform me at Belinda.athey@whittingham.northumberland.sch.uk as soon as possible.

I have been reassured by NCC that school transport will run as usual tomorrow so they will be arriving at all pick up points tomorrow and then will pick up the children as needed once we have a clear list of who will be attending (please do not send your child into school unless you are a critical worker

As a parent myself I fully appreciate how frustrating and difficult this will be for a number of you and how concerned you will be about your child’s education. I will be ensuring that for those children who are not in school learning is switched to online learning by lunch time of Monday.

We will constantly review this situation whilst we are updated by the unions, DFE and the Local Authority and continue to update our risk assessments for tier 4.

As soon as we have any further information we will be in touch.

Thank you for your continued support during this extremely difficult time.

Belinda Athey – Headteacher.

Neil Charlton – Deputy Headteacher.

Sandra McCormack – Chair of Governors.