

School Re-Opening Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

Whilst we have sincerely wished each other a Happy New Year, 2021 brings with it many of the challenges we faced in 2020. However, 2021 also brings great hope for a quickly rolled-out vaccine for COVID-19 and a gradual return to some kind of 'normality'.

The re-opening of school this term has been, predictably, complicated by rising infection rates and conflicting messages from experts and officials. Even before Christmas, there was talk of a January 'spike' and the arrival of a new COVID variant. The importance of children's education and attendance at school, whilst remaining a high priority, must be weighed against the risks of further raising the infection rates locally and nationally. Yesterday afternoon (03.01.2021) Lancashire County Council issued the following statement:

***"Responding to questions on whether Lancashire's primary schools should reopen tomorrow (Monday 4 January), Councillor Philippa Williamson, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, and Dr Sakthi Karunanithi, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, have issued the following statements:***

***Councillor Williamson said: "Since the pandemic began, schools and early years settings across Lancashire have done a remarkable job, continuing to teach young people either remotely or in person in safe, Covid-secure environments. Throughout they ensured that the children's needs come first, with special attention being given to those from the most vulnerable families and from families of key workers.***

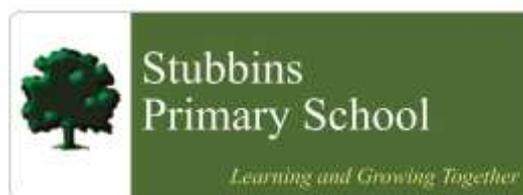
***"Clearly the best place for children is in school, not just for their education but for their social, mental and physical wellbeing. Having looked at the infection rates in Lancashire and following advice from our public health experts, we are not advocating a blanket closure of primary schools across Lancashire at this time.***

***"The ultimate decision on whether to open remains with each individual school. Each of those schools knows their own circumstances best, and we will support them to help make the right decision for their pupils and staff."***

***Dr Karunanithi added: "Although infection rates are on the rise in Lancashire, we are not in the same situation as London and the South East of England where the new variant has really taken hold. That means that we can and should encourage schools to stay open where they can. Clearly this is a fast-moving situation and must be kept under constant review, both locally and by government."***

***Smyth Harper  
Head of Communications  
Lancashire County Council"***

Clearly it is my responsibility to ensure that where we can open, the pupils and staff and their families, are as safe as possible. Our risk assessments are in place and are constantly being reviewed in light of the ever changing situation. Any actions we take as a school must be in the best interests of all concerned and have due regard to the latest advice.



The following bullet points are in response to the situation as it stands, and hopefully answer some of the questions you may have:

- **EXISTING MEASURES REMAIN IN PLACE.** The staggered drop-off and pick-up arrangements remain, along with all other existing arrangements. Please adhere to these rules.

	<b>Drop-Off</b>	<b>Pick-Up</b>
<b>Surnames A-F</b>	<b>8:50 am</b>	<b>2:50 pm</b>
<b>Surnames G-K</b>	<b>9:00 am</b>	<b>3:00 pm</b>
<b>Surnames L-Q</b>	<b>9:10 am</b>	<b>3:10 pm</b>
<b>Surnames R-Z</b>	<b>9:20 am</b>	<b>3:20 pm</b>

- **ADDITIONAL MEASURES:**

- Parents and carers **MUST WEAR A FACE MASK** when dropping off or collecting children and whenever entering school grounds (unless there is a specific reason not to.) **PARENTS / CARERS MUST NOT ENTER THE SCHOOL BUILDING.**
- If possible, parents should **DROP THEIR CHILDREN OFF AT THE GATE** rather than entering the school grounds. Obviously, this may not be possible for the very young children.
- Similarly, children who are confident enough to walk down the drive should be collected from the school gate, where a member of staff will be on duty. **PLEASE COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CHILD'S CLASS TEACHER ABOUT THIS IF YOU ARE CHANGING THE USUAL ARRANGEMENT.**
- Classrooms will be well ventilated with **OPEN WINDOWS**, so please ensure that your child wears **WARM CLOTHING** (e.g. an extra layer under their school sweatshirt/ cardigan). If necessary, children will be allowed to wear their coat or a 'hoodie' in class to stay warm. N.B. The heating will be on constantly, but open windows inevitably mean colder rooms.

- **STAFF ABSENCE.** Miss Chamberlain and Mr Murtaugh are self-isolating. Mrs Parrish will teach Year 1 on Tuesday and Wednesday, Miss Chamberlain returns on Thursday. Mrs Duxbury and Mrs McKennell will cover Year 5 on Tuesday, Mr Murtaugh returns on Wednesday.

**We will continue to monitor staff availability, and we may need to close for certain year groups if we consider that we are unable to provide appropriate staffing to enable safe opening.**

- **CHILD ABSENCE.** We **DO NOT** issue fines for child absence, although absences may be recorded as unauthorised, depending on individual circumstances. I fully appreciate parental concerns and I do not consider it my role to force parents to do something they are anxious about.

- **HOME LEARNING.**

- Where there are individual children self-isolating due to COVID-19, work will be available to complete via. the pupil area of the school website.
- Where a **whole class** has been closed due to COVID-19, the class teacher will provide additional learning activities, for example via. Zoom.
- In both cases, communication with your child's class teacher is key.

What next?

As I have said before, I know no more about what might happen next than you do. I suspect that there will be an announcement regarding further 'lockdown' measures. Whether this will include the closure of Primary Schools remains to be seen. All I can promise is that I will continue to respond to the ever-changing situation and work to ensure that we support the children and families of Stubbins in whatever way we feel is appropriate. I will, of course, keep you informed of any changes as soon as I can. As always, we are here to answer any queries you may have and offer support if we can.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT EMAIL AND THE SCHOOL WEBSITE REMAIN THE TWO PRIMARY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS / CARERS.**

I would like to thank my staff for their continued efforts in such a worrying time for us all. I would also like to thank the friends and families of Stubbins School for your continued support and understanding.

Yours sincerely,



Mr A J Danson  
Headteacher



HM Government

NHS

**We must  
keep on protecting  
each other.**

 **HANDS**  **FACE**  **SPACE**

STAY ALERT · CONTROL THE VIRUS · SAVE LIVES