



8<sup>th</sup> January 2020

## An unusual Newsletter for unusual times

### Thank you

On Sunday we were told that all Primary schools must remain open. We spent Monday as a staff team setting up to welcome 420 pupils back to school. At 8pm on Monday night you possibly found out before us that all schools would be closed. Staff spent Tuesday preparing 420 sets of home learning resources and carrying out the massive logistical task of organising a support network for home learning and a safe haven for children whose parents work in frontline services keeping our community safe and for vulnerable pupils. **Your support was immense and we appreciate it. The large number of thanks for the home learning offer is encouraging our staff a lot. Thank you.**

### What do we need now if we are to keep the community as safe as possible?

During the last lockdown we were able to provide a safe place for pupils to do their “home learning” whose parents were working in frontline critical services and for the most vulnerable families in our community. We were able to stay open throughout.

This time we have received **many** applications from people who meet the loose government definition of critical worker and who could help to stop the spread of the virus by keeping their children at home. (We estimate more than 30 families with places at the moment who didn't attend school in the last lockdown at the same Covid Alert Level of risk.)

**This is putting our community at increased risk of spreading the virus. It is also increasing the chance of us having to keep the school closed to all pupils for even longer. We are also at risk of not being able to stay open if the virus comes to school in any “bubble”.**

I am hopeful that over the weekend I will receive a number of emails to [keyworker@newby.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:keyworker@newby.n-yorks.sch.uk) from parents who want to help us to get school reopened to everyone as soon as possible and who want to play their part in keeping our community as safe as possible.

The email could say something along the lines of:

*“Thank you for helping me to get organised. Now that I am settled, I am in a position to keep ##### at home. I will talk to his/her teachers about how to support my child at home.”*

*(I'm sorry if this may appear patronising, but I know that is better than me calling parents next week and asking for full details of why they can't follow the most important and safest government guidance.)*

**“Parents and Carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can.”**

*(DfE January 2021)*

STOP PRESS: Mrs R has just sent me an email saying that she is able to keep her children at home next week and has given permission for me to share that helpful news.

**And finally, a massive thank you to our front-line workers who are serving our community at great personal risk during a very difficult time.**

I know that all school staff will continue to provide support in every way possible to help your child at home. **Please contact us if you need anything.**

*Chris Kirkham-Knowles*

