



'working and growing together'

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Headteacher: Mrs Susan Harrison
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10th January 2021

Dear Parents / carers,

Happy 2021!!! What a start! Thank you all so much for your patience this past week with everything. We realise that we had an INSET day initially and then closure day at short notice, which will have been an inconvenience, but in hindsight, we needed these and they were essential in trying to put plans in place – this has been extremely difficult even with these two days and the main reason for the delay in sending you this newsletter. The delay has enabled me to include some information only released, or clarified, by the Government on Friday 8th January.

So, in this week's newsletter, I will try to explain and update you with regards to some of the most recent guidance but also highlight the reality of the situation in school so that you better understand why you may experience issues in obtaining places, getting replies to calls and e:mails and, of course, experience problems with remote learning. I have included links to the relevant documentation on the Government guidance for you also:

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges)

CRITICAL KEY WORKER AND VULNERABLE CHILD PLACES:

We know we have needed to question the need for places in some instances and prioritise place allocation too which is not something that we have wanted to do but that has been necessary for the position we have found ourselves in. To give this some context, during the first lockdown in March, at the start, school had numbers of pupils in school that tended to be between 20 and 25 on average. At the very start, some days it was below 10. Even when school opened up to greater numbers in June, when pupils in UFS, Year 1 and Year 6 returned as directed by the government, we only reached 100 pupils in the very last couple of weeks. This week we have had around 80 pupils in school and this is set to increase next week.

The guidance on attendance, particularly regarding nursery attendance and critical worker places has been reviewed and updated on several occasions since last lockdown and on a couple of occasions during the past week and we understand that this can be confusing. This has not been helped by mixed messages on social media and in television discussions and interviews, even including today. A few things to note in the guidance, that was updated again on Friday 8th are:

'Attendance at school

Children and young people are eligible to attend school or college if:

- At least one parent or carer is a critical worker, **and they can't keep their child at home**. Critical workers are **those whose work is critical to the coronavirus** (COVID19) and EU transition response
- They meet the definition for vulnerable children and young people

Critical worker children

Your child's school or college will speak to you to identify whether your child needs to attend. **You should keep your child at home if you can.**

They may ask to see simple evidence to check whether you are a critical worker such as your work ID badge or a pay slip.'
(taken from '*What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges*' – [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges))

If you believe that you should be allocated a place and haven't or you have been allocated a place but don't need one, please contact school to discuss this. We have had some parents asking for places who work for companies who are currently not placing them on furlough but who do not feature in the official list of critical workers that school needs to follow. We do not want to be in the position of refusing parents places for their children but we must follow this list to keep numbers in school at a safe level.



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REMOTE LEARNING

We also recognise that we are now asking many of you to revert to helping your children continue their education at home and that this is an enormously challenging role, especially if you are also working from home at the same time or have children who need more adult support to enable this. I can assure you that we are doing our very best to ensure that we can support you with remote learning. This will be different to the previous lockdowns. There will be far more engagement with teachers in school virtually than before. There will be far more direction, introduction and explanation than before. There will be more varied approaches to learning than before. However, this all depends on technology and you having the correct information and ability to keep up to date with messages and notifications. Therefore, the following things are of great importance:

- **Your contact details must be up to date, including e:mail and phone numbers** – communication now is more dependent on these than ever before so whenever either change, you must let school know as soon as possible
- **You need the log-in details for all of your children for all learning platforms and websites** – these details have all been sent home previously, but this week, we have needed to send out these again for those who have lost or misplaced them. Please keep them in a safe place where they are easily accessible. It has taken a lot of staff's time this week, in a very busy week, to re-send these to people who have requested them.

You may have read, or heard, in the week that schools could be subject to a visit from OFSTED inspectors if parents raise complaints about the remote learning on offer by school. I would ask that parents please contact school first if you have any concerns about the remote learning on offer so that we are given the opportunity to explain or address the issues prior to the above happening. As mentioned, we are doing our best to deliver all we are being instructed to do and what we have on offer does meet all DfE expectations regarding this as the remote learning offer document sent around details. Again, to give some context, teachers have never had to teach in this way before and usually, when anything new like this is introduced, there is a comprehensive, face-to-face training package in place for teachers to give them the skills and confidence needed to deliver the new initiatives. This has not been the case with remote learning. We know what we have in place is not perfect but we do know it will improve over time. This happened when we introduced Seesaw back in April and the same will happen now we have added Microsoft Teams, alongside Seesaw, as our main platforms to deliver the home learning. Where parents and carers have raised issues, I have managed so far to explain the reasons behind the decisions we have made and they have ended up understanding our situation and sympathetic to it. We do know that we will encounter problems. Your patience and understanding will be key to the success of this.

Year 5 parents and carers have already had to show patience with this as we encountered technical issues. We thank you for this. We do think we have an alternative plan in place, should the technical issue arise again on Monday, that will still allow us to run the live sessions for register in the morning and feedback in the afternoon, alongside recorded lesson introductions. Fingers crossed!!

COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL AND PARENTS

Already, having implemented the remote learning offer for only a few days, as well as the changes in some of our procedures, we have realised that we do need to gather some more information from you. We will do this via Microsoft Forms surveys. I apologise as we know we have sent out several of these already but they are an easy and quick way for us to obtain the information we need to support everyone in a situation where paper-based letters is not possible. Of course, they are dependent on you completing them so we would ask that if you receive a survey from us that you complete it as quickly as possible. Otherwise, again, we spend valuable time chasing up this information. Without completion of the surveys, you could miss out on places being offered, loans of devices and other vital information.



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With regards other communications to school, apologies for those who have been e:mailing this week and had to wait for replies from myself. Owing to how incredibly busy school has been, the chance to read, let alone reply to, many of these e:mails during the school day, has been almost non-existent due to the other tasks that have needed attention and time this week. The mailbox at FW-Enquires@ipmat.co.uk is monitored regularly by the office staff and they may be able to reply more quickly than myself so this is a better option to use should you need a quick reply. Anything that should then come through to me will be passed on. If you do specifically need myself then, of course, please e:mail, understanding that, certainly for the next week or so, a quick response is unlikely.

Following this newsletter, you will receive some of the documents that we have needed to update and create since the announcement on Monday. These documents will be uploaded and available on the website also from tomorrow. They largely address changes in policy and procedures to: safeguarding, behaviour and remote learning. There is also a new agreement we have created that we need to use should we loan you a device to help with remote learning. You do not need to complete this as yet. School will contact you when we are able to loan you a device but we do envisage this will be this week at some point.

The documents that will be sent out are:

POLICY - BEHAVIOUR - COVID19 ADDITIONAL APPENDIX – It is essential that you read this to understand the expectations regarding behaviour in school and when accessing remote learning. It also details rewards and sanctions in place, explaining that should pupils **deliberately** not follow rules or **repeatedly** break rules and put the safety of others at risk then parents will be expected to collect children immediately and the offer of a place may well be withdrawn;

POLICY - Safeguarding and Remote Learning – As we move into a situation whereby more pupils are at home than in school and those at home will be accessing online learning, we have needed to review and update some of the policies and procedures in place in order to ensure that we safeguard all children. Children at home accessing remote learning helps us out enormously with our safeguarding duty. Where pupils do not engage with home learning, we will need to make contact with regular telephone calls and possible socially distanced home visits to check that children and their families are all safe and well and have everything they need to access home learning;

AGREEMENT FOR DEVICE LOAN – this has been sent so you are able to read this prior to agreeing to loan a device. This way, when school contacts you, you are fully aware of what you are agreeing to when loaning a device;

REMOTE LEARNING OFFER – this document was sent out earlier in the week but will be sent again so everyone has access to them all on the same e:mail;

REMOTE LEARNING GUIDE FOR TEAMS – this document was sent out earlier this week also.

SCHOOL ADMISSION TO UFS

Children born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017 are due to start full-time education at an infant/primary school in September 2021. If you are a Wakefield resident and you haven't yet applied for a full-time school place for your child, you must complete your online application form at www.wakefield.gov.uk/admit and submit it by the closing date of Friday 15th January 2021.



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Safeguarding

Please be aware of how long children spend on devices during the holidays and monitor their use.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/need-help>

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/schools-esafety/primary/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/>

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/tiktok/>

Other useful links:

<https://parentinfo.org> - resources and guidance for parents on a wealth of subjects

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/> - guidance about popular apps, games and networks children may be accessing

<https://www.starwakefield.org.uk/> - resources and support to help deal with bereavement

<https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/> - resources to help with mental health and wellbeing

<https://youngminds.org.uk/> - Young Minds

<https://wf-i-can.co.uk/> - Online resources for children and young people in Wakefield with mental health and wellbeing

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/> - NSPCC

<https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/> - website for safer sleep for babies

www.iconcope.org – website offering support around normal infant crying and how to cope / manage this

Useful Numbers

YOUNG MINDS PARENTS HELPLINE: 0808 8025544

CHILD LINE - Help for adults concerned about a child call us on 0808 800 5000

CHILD LINE - Help for children and young people call Childline on 0800 1111

NHS - For urgent medical help – use the NHS 111 online service, or call 111 if you're unable to get help online.

NHS - For life-threatening emergencies – call 999 for an ambulance.

POLICE – 101 for non-emergencies or 999 in an emergency

REFUGE – Call 0808 2000 247 for support from the National Domestic Abuse Helpline

NORMANTON FOOD BANK - 01924 895634 or 07307 189851

I appreciate there is a lot of information in this newsletter and the documents to come. As always, we will try our best to communicate as much as we can as quickly as we can, once we have digested the information ourselves.

Thank you once more, for all of your support and understanding,

To those of you who have taken the time to offer kind words of support to us, thank you also so very much. These may only be small gestures to yourselves, but to us they are making an enormous difference at the most testing of times,

Paul Quarry

(Acting Headteacher)



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COVID19 Symptoms At Home Flow Chart

