



Head Teacher :
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SEAHAM HARBOUR NURSERY SCHOOL
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4th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your patience during these worrying and confusing times.

Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic in March last year, the staff of our nursery have worked hard to make sure we provide a safe place for children to attend. We would like to thank you for the support you have shown us across this time.

As you will be aware, things are changing rapidly in our country and we find ourselves in a far more worrying position, even when compared to two weeks ago. Cases have surged and a new variant of Coronavirus has emerged, which is reported to be more transmissible amongst children than previously thought. The North East region has been placed into Tier 4 restrictions, in line with London and many other South East areas. Many schools within these areas are closed due to rapidly increasing cases. Significant pressure is being placed on the Government from many sources, including Durham County Council and teaching unions, to keep all schools in Tier 4 closed.

Due to the above local and national developments, some staff have been advised by their unions and professional associations that they should not teach full classes at the current time as the risks to pupils, staff and communities from coronavirus are too great.

My responsibility as a Headteacher is to provide a safe environment and under these circumstances, bringing all our children back together potentially poses a serious risk not only to the children themselves, but to you the families, the school staff and the wider public.

Myself, the Chair of Governors and the whole staff team have agonised about the decision we should make, due to the situation we find ourselves in. We have carried out comprehensive risk assessments and it is with great regret that the conclusion we have reached is that it is unsafe to fully open our nursery to all children right now. I have therefore made the very reluctant but necessary decision to close the school to all children, except children of critical key workers and those who are vulnerable. Initially, this will be for a period of two weeks until the week beginning Monday 18th January. This will naturally be under constant review.

I appreciate that this news will be both disappointing and worrying for many of you and understand the difficult position that this will put many of you in. The most important consideration is protecting the lives of your children, your families, the school staff and the wider community. Our staff team are working on home learning and information for parents and this will be made available through e-mails and via the school website.

We have provided additional information on the Governments criteria of a critical key worker, along with this letter. **If you believe that your child will qualify for a childcare place at nursery from Tuesday 5th January, please complete the attached form and return by e-mail to seahamharbour.nursery@durhamlearning.net** Please be aware, that these places are limited and it is important that you only take a place if you have no alternative childcare and you have no other option available.

Please respond by 4pm today, we apologise for the tight timescale but as you know the situation we are in is changing rapidly. Depending on the number of requests we may need to prioritise families whereby both parents are classed as critical key workers or single parent families who are critical key workers.

We will let you know by e-mail the outcome of your request later today.

As your child's headteacher I truly feel that the best place for children to be is in school but at all times my overriding consideration has to be the health and safety of all pupils, their families and the wider community. Once again thank you for your support and patience at this very difficult time, it is very much appreciated. We have to believe that better times are ahead and remain positive in the way that we face adversity, trying the best we can to get through it together.

Stay safe and kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Carole Scott
Headteacher

