



Dalton St Mary's CE Primary School

Dear Parents,

Following long discussions, information gathering and various communications with the Local Authority over the weekend I am writing to inform you that Dalton St Mary's will remain closed until the 18th January 2021. I recognise that this will cause frustration however, I hope you understand this decision has not been taken without great consideration. It is always our intention to keep our children, staff and our families as safe as we possibly can. This, in turn, helps to protect the wider community.

Yesterday saw:

- Unions advising staff that in the current climate, with uncertainty around the new strain of Covid-19 and rising rates, primary schools may not be safe.
- Staff in different unions were advised not to attend school and move to remote learning.
- Cumbria County Council wrote to the Government to request that primary schools in Cumbria should be closed due to concerns regarding rising rates in the area.
- The Government refused this request yesterday, however Cumbria County Council are asking this to be reviewed again this week.
- Director of Public Health for Cumbria Colin Cox, speaking yesterday, said it was Cumbria's darkest day for infection rates but fears worse is yet to come.

Once again we find ourselves in very uncertain times. As a school we intend to offer our children and families as much support as we can whilst learning from home.

- We have a very clear plan for learning from home
- We have set out a clear timetable for families to collect iPads from school - timings will be sent by text message later today
- All children from Reception to Y6 will have their own iPad and access to their Showbie learning platform and other Apps
- Nursery children will access learning through Showbie, supported by school staff and parents
- Technical support is available in the DSM Family Tech Clinic on Showbie: JRHH5
- We will be offering childcare for children of Keyworkers - booked by email to l.woodburn@dsmprimary.com
- We will keep communication to parents clear and timely
- I will be contactable by email: l.woodburn@dsmprimary.com and will be happy to arrange a time for a telephone call if required
- Mrs Irving will be contactable by email: office@dsmprimary.com and will also be happy to arrange a time for a telephone call if required
- All teaching staff will be contactable through the Class Parent Chat in your child's year group in Showbie. They will also be happy to arrange a time for a telephone call if required
- There is a whole school communication group on Showbie: DSM Parent Group; HZ3W5

I can only repeat that this decision has been made with very careful consideration. This weekend has been very difficult. I always say that I have the best job in the world - I truly believe this when I am in school with the children as this is where I and the staff sincerely want to be. Hopefully we will see an improving picture over the coming days, I will continue to remain abreast of all the information made available to me and will communicate any changes to you as parents in a timely manner. I am grateful of your support in this challenging time and continue to hope that 2021 will see a recovery of our communities being able to come together safely.

Take Care

Mrs L Woodburn