



Whitstable Junior School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm sure that many of you will have been following the news today and have picked up on the statement regarding school closures, but for those of you who may not have had the chance to see it yet, we wanted to make sure everyone was as up to date as possible.

It has been rare, since the start of the pandemic, that schools have been provided with much clarity or advance notice, but we are pleased that we now have at least some certainty about what will be happening in the coming weeks (although we are, of course, disappointed that we won't have everyone back in school for a little while yet). The key announcements from today in parliament are as follows:

- The earliest schools might 'begin to re-open' will be Monday 8th March, which is the start of the third school week after the half-term holiday;
- There will be a plan/review set out on Monday 22nd February (the first day after the half-term holiday), with further updates;
- When the decision to return has been made, schools will get two weeks' notice of this.

This does mean that we have at least four more school weeks of home-learning under the current arrangements. I know that this will be disappointing for many families and the children, but I hope that it provides some hope that there might be an end in sight, at least in terms of getting the children back into school.

We also received a clarification from the Department for Education (DfE) yesterday that schools would not be asked to open over half-term for children of critical workers as was the case in the first lock-down. I don't think anyone was particularly expecting there to be an offer, but I thought it was worth sharing in case anyone had been wondering.

Moving forwards, we will continue with everything that we have in place and keep seeking ways to keep everyone supported and motivated with our home-learning provision. I'd like to thank you all for your continued commitment to the incredibly hard task that is home-learning.

Kind regards,

Annie Knoupe
Headteacher

