

St Mary's RC Primary School

'Growing, loving and learning in the arms of Mary'

*Meadowside
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Telephone 0191 5228787
Headteacher Mr M. Clephane*



Dear parents / carers,

08/01/21

This has been an incredibly difficult week for our school community. The late announcement on Monday night at 8pm was a great shock as we were all prepared to have all children back to school. It meant that Tuesday was used for preparation and risk assessment while learning was delivered on line.

We have followed guidance from the Local Authority throughout and went down the route for the first time of asking for identification for key worker status. This was with the intention of limiting the number of children as the message from the Government was to, 'Stay Home'. We were swamped by the number of key worker applications and knew it would take a great deal of time and effort to look at every case, because of this we let people bring their children in rather than close the school again. This meant that we have been operating this week in a way that we feel is not as safe as it possibly can be.

After going through all the applications we restricted the key worker category to reduce numbers. This has meant we can meet our risk assessment targets. It also meant a lot of people have been disappointed and their working lives challenged as a result. This has been a painful experience and one I would not like to repeat.

I thank so many of you for adjusting shift patterns and child care to meet the demands of this new lock down.

We are determined to make the online learning and lesson delivery equal to the delivery in school. The children will be doing the same activities and following the same curriculum so no child is discriminated against. This does not mean that home schooling will be easy and there will be lots of issues going forward. My wife and I are both critical workers and my wife works from home and has both our girls to home school. I understand how challenging it is but we choose not to put our girls in school.

I hope the ability to deliver live lessons should go towards relieving some of the pressure and teachers are available on line to respond to your comments too.

None of this is ideal or what we want. We want all our children in school but the reality is once again the ball has been passed to us to do our bit to prevent the spread of the virus.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Clephane'.

Mr M Clephane, Headteacher

