



Wibsey Primary School
North Road, Bradford, BD6 1RL
Headteacher: Mr N M Cooper

Dear Parent/Carer

As a follow up to yesterday's letter, I have to inform you that Wibsey Primary will be closed to all pupils tomorrow, Monday 4th January 2021.

I have been informed that around half the teaching staff will not teach full classes, having been advised by their union (NEU) not to attend school if they are expected to. This will not be the same for all schools, so some will be able to open and some will not.

I have been working with the Senior Leadership Team today, and will continue to do so tomorrow to make arrangements for Tuesday onwards. Clearly this news has come at the end of a holiday and over a weekend, making it impossible to plan. I will send further information once I have consulted with the Local Authority as to how they are addressing this with the unions.

I am determined we shall have a plan with you by the end of the day tomorrow for Tuesday - but if staff follow union advice it may be a different offer to normal, or to that which you and I would want.

I will be asking all staff to provide online learning for tomorrow and to have this ready for you for 9.00am. Staff are still expected to offer remote and key worker/vulnerable cover - so again I will clarify this with you tomorrow for Tuesday onwards. The key message though is that we will be closed to all tomorrow.

This isn't how I expected to be starting the New Year but I accept that things have moved quickly and that many of our community have concerns about the new variant of Covid. I will have everyone working tomorrow on the best plan we can.

As always I will share information with you as soon as I have it. I have added the letter sent to me by NEU members for you so that you have the same information as me.

Best regards

Nigel M Cooper
Headteacher
Wibsey Primary School

Dear [name of head],

Re: Health & Safety

I am writing to you following the increase in transmission and infection rates currently recorded across England.

You are, I am sure, aware that you have legal duties to protect the health, safety and welfare of your staff and pupils. Those duties arise under the following legislation: -

- Sections 2 and 3 of the Health & Safety Act 1974
- Regulations 3 and 8 of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Regulation 4 of the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Regulation 4 of the Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Regulation 7 of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002

The most recent advice from SAGE is that schools should not open in January¹ other than for children of key workers and vulnerable children. This is because the scientific advice is that it is not safe for schools to open. There are new variants of Covid-19 that are highly infectious and infection rates have increased significantly since schools closed.

I appreciate that measures have been in place since September to allow the school to open but according to SAGE those measures may no longer be sufficient. They state in their most recent report: -

The introduction of Tier 4 measures in England combined with the school holidays will be informative of the strength of measures required to control the new variant but analysis of this will not be possible until mid-January.

Based on the above I do not believe that it is safe for me to return to teaching or supporting full classes at [name of school].

If I do attend [name of school] I believe that this will present a **serious** and **imminent** danger to my health and safety.

I am therefore writing to inform you that I am exercising my contractual right not to attend an unsafe place of work. I believe that not attending work in the current circumstances is an appropriate step for me to take for the following reasons:

1. The **dangers** that are preventing me from attending work are the risk of contracting coronavirus and or spreading coronavirus to others.
2. The **person(s)** I am seeking to protect are myself, my family, our pupils, their families, my colleagues, their families and members of the public.
3. I believe that this danger is **serious** because coronavirus infection is potentially fatal and has already resulted in more than 73,512 deaths in the UK with a significant up surge in recent weeks.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/948606/s0991-sage-meeting-74-covid-19.pdf

4. I believe that, if I were to attend work, the danger would be **imminent** because before Christmas the highest infection rates were in children of school age, and the new variant may be more transmissible amongst students than previously.
5. I will be happy to return to the workplace once SAGE is satisfied that the R rate has decreased, scientific advice has been produced on safety measures required to make schools more "Covid secure", risk assessments have been updated and any necessary further safety measures implemented.

In the meantime, I am of course willing to carry out any of my duties that can be undertaken from my home, including planning, preparing and delivering on-line learning including supporting colleagues; and being in school supporting the learning of key worker and vulnerable children where necessary.

Yours sincerely,