



**FOX HOLLIES SCHOOL**  
Highbury Community Campus  
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B13 8QB

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**BSSCT**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure you are all by now aware of the Prime Minister's announcement last night that we are once again in a national lockdown and all schools will remain closed except to children of key workers and our most vulnerable.

I heard this news at the same time as you, but at Fox Hollies we had already taken the decision to close to the majority this week as a review of our risk assessment given the rising cases and new variant deemed it unsafe for the whole school to return.

We made a decision this week to have a small number of students in whilst we awaited more guidance from the government and tried to organise mass testing. Obviously now that we are in lockdown until February half term, we will be reviewing which students really need to be in school and in order to give an offer to more, we may need to look at part-time timetables to keep numbers safe.

We will be asking you to complete quick survey to inform us of your intentions as to whether you wish your child to attend school. All our students are classed as vulnerable but we are faced with difficult choices to make as to who are our **most** vulnerable as it is not possible or safe to open fully at this stage. We will also take children of key workers and ask in the survey that you supply information regarding your role if you are claiming key worker status. You will be sent a text with a link to complete the survey.

I know many of you will be concerned about your children being out of school and class teachers will be getting in touch with you to explain the remote learning offer for your child. We will continue to adapt and improve on this and welcome your feedback.

We genuinely wish we could have more students in but the health and safety of our students and staff is paramount. We have been reassured repeatedly by Public Health England that students do not get too ill with this virus and so far I am glad to say that seems to have been the case, but that fails to recognise that our staff do and sadly throughout this pandemic we have had many staff become seriously poorly with Covid-19.





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### Lateral Flow Testing

This morning we have carried out mass 'lateral flow' testing of our staff, which has been no mean feat! These tests are designed to be given to asymptomatic people and will give a result in 30 minutes. The test involves an oral swab of the tonsils and the nose and needs to be self-administered. Unfortunately at the moment this means that the testing is not appropriate for the majority of our students who will not be able to test themselves. I am trying to get some additional clinical or nursing support to help with this but currently this is not forthcoming. I will keep you updated on any progress in this area. If your child is due to be in school this week or next and you feel they would be able to self-administer the test, please let the office know and we will send out the relevant consent forms.

### Free School Meals

We will continue to provide voucher codes for those eligible families through this lockdown. The vouchers will be provided via Edenred as per the Christmas vouchers. Please ensure you keep all information provided to you in the Christmas pack for reference. Codes for the vouchers will be sent via text to you when we receive them which will be on a weekly basis initially. If you have any issues with the codes please email [enquiry@foxhollies.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@foxhollies.bham.sch.uk) with the initial query.

### Shielding advice

If you were previously classed as extremely vulnerable, you are strongly advised to work from home and for children who have a shielding letter, stay at home and not attend school. Adults with Downs Syndrome are immediately classed as extremely vulnerable and should not be attending work or school/college.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

I hope you are all continuing to keep well. **Please respond to the survey as soon as possible to allow us to plan for next steps and keep you informed.**

Many thanks for your continued support,

Sinead Davies

(Head teacher)

