



**4 January 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year! I hope you had a good break over the holidays and an opportunity to see family and friends. It was lovely to talk to so many children back in school today and to hear their news and all about their favourite present.

### **Implications of the Omicron variant and of increased staff absence levels**

In light of national news reports, some parents may be concerned about the implications of the Omicron variant and of increased staff absence levels. The Secretary of State for Education has written to all schools and settings and the message appears clear:

- Do everything in your power to protect face to face learning for children.
- If operational challenges caused by workforce shortages in your setting make delivery of face-to-face teaching impossible, consider ways to implement a flexible approach to learning. Flexible delivery involves utilising all available teaching and non-teaching workforce to maximise on-site education for as many pupils as possible while flexibly delivering provision either on-site or remotely to some pupils.
- Flexible delivery should only be on a short-term measure and settings should return to full-time in-person attendance for all pupils as soon as practicable.

**As ever, if we are having continued difficulties with staff absence or high levels of infection which means we need to consider a full or partial closure, this will be seen as a last resort.** The DfE has published an updated list of [children of critical workers and vulnerable children](#). In the event of a full or partial closure, priority will be given to vulnerable children and children of critical workers to attend full time. It is therefore helpful if you familiarise yourself with the list which we will refer to if needed.

### **Remote learning**

All staff are aware of the limitations of remote learning for pupils of all ages. **Staff will provide remote learning when required but unfortunately, it cannot replicate face to face teaching.** At Bramhope, remote learning operates as follows:

- Pupils who are self-isolating and unwell are not expected to undertake remote learning
- Pupils who are self-isolating for a short period and are well enough to learn, should select relevant work from the remote learning section of the school website.

- Pupils who are isolating for a longer period and are well enough to learn, will be set work by the class teacher. The class teacher will liaise with parents about the work which should be submitted and regularly 'check in' with the parent throughout the period of self-isolation.
- If a staff member is remotely teaching a large group or class of pupils, work will be set via Teams. **Parents should contact our admin team if they require a login to Teams: [admin@bramhopeprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@bramhopeprimaryschool.co.uk)**
- If your child does not have access to an appropriate device at home and they need to access remote learning, it may be possible for the school to lend them a laptop. This would need to be collected from the school.

### Visitor protocol

As part of our revised COVID-19 risk assessment (September 2021), parents and external visitors may be admitted onto the school site during the school day where a visit out of school hours is not possible. **All visitors are asked to adhere to the attached protocol, regardless of when the visit takes place. [These protocols have been further updated to reflect the Government's revised guidance regarding lateral flow device testing for visitors \(9th Dec 2021\).](#)**

Please note that separate protocols apply for school events such as parents' evenings and these will be communicated before the event.

Finally, please be assured that I have no information about the possibility of any school closure or move to remote learning. I am simply writing to clarify the current situation in school. Like you, I very much hope that we are able to maintain as much normality as possible throughout the next wave of infections.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Yours sincerely

*Rachel Colbourn*

Rachel Colbourn  
Headteacher

