

16 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for your support at the start of term and for all your positive messages about the measures that we have taken to make the school as safe as possible.

You will have seen in the national media over the last couple of days, concerns being expressed by school leaders and NHS Trusts that we have staff who are having to isolate at home unable to access a test owing to the lack of availability, relative to demand.

As a Leadership Team, we met on Monday to explore the potential implications of having too many staff unable to attend school while waiting for a test or a result. I have discussed this with all the other Whitehill and Bordon Headteachers and this was also picked up in a meeting I was part of with many other Hampshire secondary Headteachers, yesterday.

Clearly, there will be a point in any school where if there are insufficient adults to supervise students the school would be unable to operate safely and effectively. We have re-visited our contingency planning from last term and modelled a number of scenarios which would allow us to move to a form of blended learning.

All our models ensure that all students enjoy on site learning with their teachers for at least part of each week. In the first instance, it may be that we have 4 year groups on site on one day with one year group learning from home on a rota basis. If staff availability reduced further, we would have to consider 2 year groups being at home each day on a rota basis.

We anticipated that this may be necessary at some point in the Autumn term. However, I did not think we would need to prepare for this quite so soon. Already there are schools across the UK which have had to partially or fully close.

Please be assured that I would only partially close as an absolute last resort. We have waited so long to re-open fully and it would be terrible not to remain fully open for all students.

As always, I wanted to share with you our current thinking, so that you remain aware of possible situations. I will keep you updated and I know we all hope that this national issue is swiftly addressed so that all students can remain in school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Hemmings'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping tail.

Mr P. Hemmings
Headteacher