

Learning together to be the best we can be

Headteacher - Nichola Irving



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Dear Parents and Carers

First of all I must apologise for the timing of this communication. As always at Horton Grange, we have taken into consideration lots of factors and have responded cautiously but most important with the safety of children, staff and the whole school community. This decision has not been taken lightly and it is with a heavy heart that I am writing this letter to you. I realise and acknowledge this is an anxious and stressful time for everyone which has been compounded by such short notice.

In light of the Government's decision to keep primary schools in London and parts of the south east closed, teaching unions have been concerned about the safety of the schools in other areas. The latest COVID 19 case data lists Blyth wards as having higher than average numbers of cases.

The national position may change once again, however in the interim period as some staff are following the advice of their unions **school will be open for children of key workers, those who are vulnerable and those with an Educational Health Care Plan ONLY. School will be closed to all children tomorrow, including key worker and vulnerable to allow us to organise provision going forward.** At this stage it is impossible to state how long this will be for.

Our staff and children have been amazing throughout the pandemic, showing incredible resilience and all staff have done everything they can to protect our young people and their families and for many this has been a very difficult decision to make. Your support throughout has been invaluable too. Unions have raised concerns over the greater transmissibility of the new variant, rising infection rates and the increased risks to the school community. Therefore they have advised members only to be available to teach key worker and vulnerable children. Unions are advising their members they should only agree to teach full classes when SAGE is satisfied that the "R" rate has decreased and scientific advice has been produced on measures to make school COVID secure.

We understand that this is a very difficult time for our parents, carers and our children. Hopefully if we all work together we can help to reduce the infection rates.

Once again the government have produced a list of Critical Workers please visit www.gov.uk

In summary Critical Workers include people working in:

- health and social care
- education and child care
- key public services
- local and national government
- food and other necessary goods



- public safety and national security
- transport and border
- utilities, communication and financial services

If you feel you fall into any of these categories and intend sending your child to school during this period, please complete the Google Form which will follow shortly. Please complete the form by no later than 10am tomorrow (Tuesday 5th January) indicating that you require a place. Our aim is to have this running for key workers and vulnerable by Wednesday 6th January.

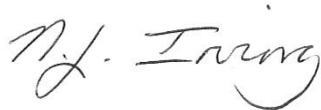
Remote learning will once again be available from Tuesday 5th and is accessible via School 360 or Tapestry. Please contact us if you have any difficulties in obtaining the information or need resources on help@blythhortongrange.co.uk . Further information regarding home learning will be communicated in due time.

If you are in receipt of Free School Meals and require a packed lunch please telephone the school office to arrange this. Meals will be available from Wednesday 6th January.

Once again I apologise for this but feel we have to act to keep everyone safe at this time.

Stay safe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "N. Irving".

Nichola Irving
Headteacher