



The Hills Academy

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Headteacher: Mrs Moya Whitehead

Dear Parents/Carers,

After strategic discussion with our Chair of Governors and Education Officers at Bedford Borough Council, we have made the difficult decision, in common with other local schools, to move learning online for the children at The Hills Academy. We will review this on Friday.

Senior Officers in Bedford Borough have said:

"The Council view is that primary schools should only be open for the first two weeks of term to vulnerable pupils and children of key workers due to the local and national evidence of the increase in cases and the rapid transmission of the new variant of COVID."

Our main concerns are: -

- Increased risks of spreading infection as Bedford Borough has rapidly rising numbers approaching 700 per 100,000, placing us high nationally
- Staff shortages through illness & self-isolation due to a family member testing positive
- Union advice to staff suggesting that they only agree to work with vulnerable and key worker pupils

We have agonised over this decision, and understand the incredible pressures this brings to bear on you. We will be open from tomorrow morning for designated vulnerable pupils, children of key workers and children with EHC plans, but we do ask that you keep your child at home for remote learning if you are safely able to do so. If you require a keyworker place for your child you will need to send an email to keyworker@thehillsacademy.co.uk with your child's name and class and reason/role for requesting the place as soon as possible (before 4pm please).

We will be in touch this afternoon regarding arrangements for remote learning, which will include the use of live video teaching via TEAMS (particularly for Years 2 to 6). Please do ensure that you can get your child onto TEAMS and seek help from the school office if you need it. There will also be some arrangements made for the staggered collection of resources, for your child, tomorrow.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the school or me if you are facing hardship or need any other kind of support.

Very best wishes

Moya Whitehead