



8th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

This week the Government took the difficult decision to close schools. This was following scientific advice that, "There is accumulating evidence that there is increased community transmission when schools are open."

The Government also asked school leaders, teachers and their support teams to remain open for the most vulnerable children who they believe would be at even greater difficulty if school were to close. The Government is also aware that some workers such as frontline NHS staff, and those in food production and distribution are critical to the national response to Covid 19; and that schools could support these parents by remaining open for their children.

School staff have responded to this and are willing to take their place on the frontline with other public servants to support the national response. The learning provided for children at home is the same as children are learning in school. School staff are doing all that they can to make remote learning as effective as it can be. We would like to thank you for your support with this and for the positive feedback we have received.

Our appeal to you is that this is not business as usual. Please keep your family at home if it is at all possible, leave the spaces for the families who truly have no alternative. Our appeal to businesses is please do not interpret the critical worker list so liberally and fit staff into the criteria . School places are only for the most vulnerable and to keep truly critical operations running.

We know in Sunderland transmission rates are increasing and that the new variant is more transmittable. If we reduce the number of children making the journey to school we are doing our part to reduce the rate of transmission. Please consider carefully if you are asking for a critical worker place, please consider all safe options open to you, please only use the provision when your working pattern means you have no alternative.

If you do have a place in our emergency provision and your circumstances change, please contact school. We do appreciate the difficulty of the decisions you have had to make this week.

Yours sincerely

Susan Bell  
CEO Balmoral Learning Trust

Nicola Hair  
Head of School

Valerie Wilson  
Head of School

