**Nursery Provision during Lockdown**

Dear Parents/Carers of Nursery Pupils,

As you know, we are currently in the midst of a pandemic with infection rates and deaths higher than they have ever been. As a result, primary schools across the country have been asked to close to all but vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

The government initially said that, where possible, they would like private nurseries and childminders to remain open during lockdown. They have now updated their guidance and asked for school nurseries to try to do the same.

In the opinion of our school, and trust leaders, this is highly irresponsible and puts the lives of our families, communities and staff at risk. It also goes against the government’s own advice to stay home to stay safe. As Professor Chris Whitty (Chief Medical Officer) has said, at the end of every contact, there is always a vulnerable person whose life is being put at risk. In the nursery at Rowley Park, in any one day, the nursery classroom can be used by up to 30 different individuals and if you chose to send your child in currently, they would need to be put within a bubble with children outside of their nursery class to enable us to keep our keyworker bubbles open.

Infection rates locally in our school area of Stafford are at the time of this letter over 470 per 100,000 population. This places us just into the above average category. We are very pleased and grateful that our parents are following the government advice to keep their children at home wherever possible, and know that this is the safest thing for you to do.

We have first-hand experience in our trust of our youngest children not only contracting coronavirus but also passing it onto others, including their families back home. We know many of our families have vulnerable individuals in their households and you rightly want to protect them as much as we can.

**Our advice does not change, we continue to** **strongly advise all parents to keep their children at home if at all possible.**

Our first priority is to always keep our pupils, staff and families safe which is why we will continue to encourage you to engage with our home learning, zoom meetings and activities set by our nursery staff. You can access these in the safety of your own home, ensuring that your children continue to learn, but as safely as possible.

We acknowledge and understand the DFE guidance, and know that your own situations and needs may change, and if they do, please contact us to discuss options we have for supporting you and your nursery child through this difficult and worrying time for us all.

Thank you,

Mrs Beaumont,

Headteacher