Dear Parents,

At 8pm today, the Prime Minister announced that all state-funded schools in England will close as of Tuesday 5th January, until at least the February half term holiday (suggesting the earliest return would be Monday 22nd February). While we are obviously very sad not to be able to welcome the children back to school after the Christmas break, we feel reassured that the health and safety of the school community is best served by such action. In order to enable the school to plan and prepare safely and fully for the forthcoming period of remote learning we have taken the decision to close the school tomorrow to **all pupils**.

Despite our contingency planning, the last-minute nature of this announcement leaves us with considerable logistical planning to finalise and put in place. I will be working this evening and then with the staff team and colleagues from across the Leading Edge Partnership tomorrow to clarify the finer details for the coming period of schooling; clarifying exactly what this announcement means for all of us. I will provide these details as soon as I am able.

This will enable us to make all necessary logistical arrangements for the lockdown period, considering, for example:

* Preparation for starting full remote learning from Wednesday 6th January
* Free school meal provision arrangements
* Staffing and timetabling the critical worker and vulnerable pupil provision

The announcement did make it clear that schools will remain open for:

* the children of critical workers, so that their parents can continue to fulfil their roles in the community and;
* those considered ‘vulnerable’ – providing a safe place and access to meals and I thoroughly support this.

We will endeavour to have this provision in place from Wednesday 6th January – we are extremely sorry for any work-related issues that this may cause any of you tomorrow, but we hope you can appreciate our decision making is based around opening safely, fairly and effectively.

At this stage it would make our planning much easier if you could email me on head@st-hilary.cornwall.sch.uk if you are critical workers and will be wanting to make use of the facility at the school. To find out if you are entitled to this provision you can check at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

We will need to know the roles you are fulfilling as critical workers and may ask for paperwork to demonstrate this. It would also be beneficial if you are able to provide any details of the days you would require this provision.

**Remote learning**

Your child’s remote curriculum offer will start on Wednesday 6th January, teachers will use tomorrow to get prepared and ready for the transition from class based to remote planning and delivery. From Wednesday your children’s provision will be in line with the details outlined and shared with you all via the school website in our remote Learning Policy:

<https://www.st-hilary.cornwall.sch.uk/website/introduction_-_covid_risk_assessments_and_policies/508354>

This policy outlines the expectations for teachers, TAs, the Leadership Team and you as parents and carers in the remote learning process. It also makes it clear the lines of communication for you with the school depending on the nature of the information you are after.

Tomorrow we encourage you to take the time you need to prepare yourselves and your family for remote learning. However, if you are keen to crack on and get working, we recommend that you spend time reading with your child and complete any work you can on the school provided online learning platforms – TT-Rockstars, Maths shed, Spelling shed.

I hope that this has provided you with some clarity in the short term regarding immediate plans for you child’s next steps at St Hilary. I appreciate that you may well have more questions at this point but assure you that we will be up and running as smoothly as ever with our remote learning offer as soon as is possible and ensure that you get all of the information, support and assistance that you will require to make this period of your child’s education as purposeful and enjoyable as possible.

Thank you for your support and patience.

All the best

Mr Rob Hamshar 04/01/2021