



# St Ippolyts C.E. (Aided) Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs. R. E. Peddie BEd(Hons) NPQH

Ashbrook Lane, St. Ippolyts, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG4 7PB  
Tel: 01462 432080 Fax: 01462 438524 Email: [admin@stipps.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stipps.herts.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.stipps.herts.sch.uk](http://www.stipps.herts.sch.uk)



4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents,

I am writing to give you the latest information I have regarding school opening for the spring term.

You will no doubt be aware from the media that there has been significant debate over the weekend, with several local authorities across the country and the various national unions representing school staff challenging the government's decision to reopen primary schools. The concerns raised by unions is centred around school staff and children being in confined spaces with full sized classes, and the safety implications of this, particularly with regards to the new variant of the virus.

However, as it stands at the moment, **our school will be fully open to all pupils in all classes from tomorrow, Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January.**

I know that there has been a lot of discussion on social media over the weekend from parents across the country expressing their view that schools should be closed, particularly in Tier 4 areas. I can completely understand parents' anxieties and concerns; every family's circumstances are different and you will no doubt have your own clear opinions on schools opening based on your own situation.

I will never be in a position to offer you a guarantee that 'school is 100% safe'. All I can do is offer you my assurances that we have done and will continue to do our utmost to mitigate risks through our robust risk assessments, cleaning regimes, daily routines and hygiene measures.

I am aware that there are a small number of parents who, having assessed the risks to their family, may be considering keeping their children off school for the time being. Although the expectation is that children do attend if school is open, this is your right as a parent to do this, and I would not challenge your decision. I just ask that you let me know in writing via email [head@stipps.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@stipps.herts.sch.uk)

Where parents choose to keep children off school *whilst it is fully open*, we will not be providing remote learning for those pupils (unless pupils are deemed clinically vulnerable with a shielding letter, in isolation awaiting test results or because of a positive case in the household).

When school is open and teachers are teaching classes full time on site, it is not practicable nor reasonable, to expect them to also provide remote learning. There are some activities on the school website which you are welcome to use and children would still have access to Times Tables Rockstars

and Bug Club, but teachers would not be providing additional learning, planning or resources for use at home. The resources on the school website are general and not matched to what the children in school will be covering.

However, if at a later stage, we have to close an individual class or indeed the whole school, we would switch to our remote learning plans for all pupils, with on-site provision for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers only. If we receive notification of a potential closure, I will send out an online survey to gauge the need for key worker places and I would also send out more detail about the remote learning arrangements for each class.

I would just like to reiterate that I do not get any advance notice about whether schools will be open / closed. Like you, I find out from watching the government briefings and waiting for public announcements to be made. All headteachers would love some insider knowledge but this is definitely not the case.

I fully understand that this is a very difficult time for us all, balancing the need for children to be in school where they learn and develop best, with real concerns around safety; the same concerns and worries are shared by our school staff who have their own families and anxieties too. We really are in this together.

Thank you again for your incredible support and cooperation since March. I never thought I would still be writing Covid letters as we enter the new year, but your patience, understanding and compassion have been invaluable to me, I am so very grateful.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and, unless there are any last-minute changes, I look forward to seeing you all tomorrow.

Kind regards,



**Mrs RE Peddie**

Headteacher