



Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As set out in a letter to you last week, we plan to open both schools in the Propeller Academy Trust on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January following the INSET Day today.

The picture around schools is changing on what seems like an hourly basis and we are doing our utmost to stay abreast of emerging issues. There has been yet further activity over the last few days and the Special School guidance we were waiting for was circulated late on New Year's Eve.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/mass-asymptomatic-testing-in-specialist-settings>

We are working towards testing staff within the next 48 hours, followed by planned and risk assessed procedures for pupils once parental consent has been granted. Please note, this will be for secondary aged pupils only in the first instance. An update on the testing situation will be on Friday at the very earliest.

We still plan to open on **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January** as originally stated.

However, please note, it states in the guidance that you can request a planned absence to delay your child's return. Whilst we would love to see all children return to school, the guidance is clear:

**"If the parent of a special school pupil wishes for their child to be absent from school, the parent should let the school know in advance that the pupil will not be attending and that they are making an application for a leave of absence. The Department for Education expects schools to grant such applications for leaves of absence given the exceptional circumstances."**

If you would therefore like to keep your child at home using this route, no matter what their age is, please email your request into the school office. If you are unable to email, please hand deliver a letter to school as it is essential that we have your request in writing.

If your child has received further advice with regards to shielding, please let us know as soon as you can.

We will continue to operate the schools under the same COVID Risk Assessments as previously and monitor staffing levels carefully. However, both schools are experiencing staffing shortages presently and it may be necessary to close classes and send pupils home if staffing levels become critical to the health and safety of our community.

**A reminder:**

**Please do not send your child in to school if they are at all unwell – if they are unwell and arrive at school, we have no choice but to send them home again. If you, your child or anyone in your household shows symptom of coronavirus or is seeking a test, you MUST NOT send your child into school until there have been negative test results.**

We will of course monitor the situation and update you as frequently as we can. For now, if you need to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact the school office in the first instance. Thank you for your continued support and patience in this very challenging time.

Yours faithfully

**Stephanie Coneboy**  
Headteacher Fitzwaryn School

**Lorraine Wilson**  
Headteacher Kingfisher School