



Diocese of Portsmouth  
**English Martyrs Catholic Primary School**  
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**Headteacher**  
Mrs C Doberska

**Deputy Headteacher**  
Mr A Dworzak

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Partial Closure (return to Emergency Provision) from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

It is with a very heavy heart that I am writing to inform you that we are NO LONGER able to re-open as planned on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

You may well have seen media speculation about the opening of schools. The most recent advice from SAGE, the scientists advising the government, is that schools should not open in January, other than for children of key workers and vulnerable children, because new variants of Covid-19 are leading to significantly increased rates of Covid-19 since schools closed for Christmas.

We have a number of staff who have been ill with coronavirus over the Christmas holidays, and most are not yet well enough to return to work full-time. The NEU and Unison trade unions have also both issued guidance to their members that, with the emergence of the new strain of the virus and the rapidly rising rates of infection, it is not currently possible for schools to provide a safe environment for staff or pupils, if they re-open to all pupils, even with the extensive measures that they acknowledge schools have put in place to minimise the risks of transmission.

Our governing body, following consultation with school staff, in consideration of the SAGE guidance and with the support of Reading Borough Council, has taken the decision not to reopen the school but to move to remote learning for all children other than critical worker children and vulnerable children.

This means that the school will ONLY be open to Key Worker and Vulnerable children, until January 18<sup>th</sup>, at the earliest. Staff will provide remote learning for those pupils who are unable to be onsite during this period. (Please be aware that children who are onsite may not be taught by their usual teacher).

The keyworker survey from September is still open – please click on the link below if you have not already filled this in. We will be reviewing the applications for places tomorrow and will be informing you about allocations tomorrow afternoon. <https://forms.gle/LpXZoGWYr6WTdbQZ6>

**DO NOT send your child(ren) to school on Tuesday if you DO NOT have a confirmed place.**

We will keep you updated about full school opening and hope that this will be from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January, if the science tells us that it is safe to do so. In the meantime, please stay safe and well. We continue to pray for all affected by this terrible virus.

With very best wishes, and thanks once again for all your support in these incredibly difficult time,

Mrs Doberska