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Wednesday 27th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for continuing to do all you can with your children at home, often despite having to work from home and juggle the many issues that many of us have at the same time. We have heard from many of you, stating accurately that not all of you are trained teachers and many of you are balancing this with your actual jobs too. We do understand. We have tried to make the remote offer as manageable and as flexible as possible but we recognise the challenges you face. We know that the expectations placed on you, and us, by the government, often come face to face with what is actually possible. Thank you for doing all that is possible. Thank you all for doing your best in these challenging circumstances.

We firmly believe that school is the best place for children to learn. From communication I have received today, it looks unlikely that the Federation will be fully reopening after half term. We recognise that the data around Covid changes rapidly and that the situation as a whole is changeable, often rapidly so. I have been in discussion with regional Department for Education representatives. The government's probable plan at the moment is:

- **It has been confirmed today in the House of Commons that schools will not fully reopen after half term.** However, Primary schools are likely to reopen before Secondary schools. This date hasn't been confirmed but it seems that March 8th could be the date that schools may well be able to fully open. This could be the case for the South West. There is growing political pressure for primary schools to reopen. However, this is dependent on Covid infection rates dropping. Nationally some schools may not return until after Easter.
- When we look to have more children in school it is likely to be a staggered return with some year groups returning sooner than others. The indications suggest that the youngest children will return first.
- The Federation will close for half term for **all** children. It looks likely that those parents who work for the NHS, and need childcare, will be able to access childcare from the Local Authority. This may be provided at some school sites. Probably, not ours. This will be a decision taken by the government and then by the Local Authority. I have no other details at the moment but will confirm when I do.

This, as I have said, is **potentially all open to change** but we felt some advance warning of the likely possibilities might be helpful for your own plans and organisation.

Thank you again for all you have done to support learning at home.

Best wishes

Mr D. Preece