



January 29, 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you following the announcement from government yesterday confirming that we will have to wait until at least March 8th to welcome back all of our children.

I know I speak for the Heads and their entire school teams when I say how deeply disappointed we all are that we cannot welcome children back immediately after half term. We do truly miss them and are working incredibly hard to support them and you, during this challenging and potentially sad time.

Every day the media bombards us all with depressing data, stories of overcrowded hospitals, a truly unthinkable death rate and sadly, offers very little in the way of hope. BUT there is hope – thankfully, infection rates are starting to drop off (and let's hope that speeds up;) and the roll out of the vaccination programme offers a real glimmer of light in the darkness of this covid winter. And, I might add, that a really positive bit of data is that Worcestershire is in the top 3 local authorities nationally that are **ahead** of their vaccination programme. Well done Worcestershire, long may it continue!

The media also bombards us with information we already know! For instance, how important it is for children to be in school and how difficult it is for parents to have to home school children. As I said, I think we all know that already and I am not sure it is helpful to keep saying it. **Of course** it is important that children are in school – no one would disagree. And please believe me when I tell you that Endeavour Schools share that belief. That is why we are working so hard to ensure that for those children in school, we are doing our best to continue to offer high quality learning experiences.

But on top of that, we are also doing our very best to offer the same high quality for our children who are currently at home; we are following the DFE guidance on home schooling that we have been given, (for instance minimum 3 hours a day, provision every day etc).

At this point, I would like to offer my deepest and most sincere thanks to all the staff in schools who are working so hard to plan and prepare work for our "home learners." We KNOW it's not the same as being at school, but we are constantly refining what we are offering in order to make it best fit the needs of our children. And we do encourage you to get involved with this process **as much as your circumstances at home allow you to!**

Now I want to say something to you and I know that this may not be "politically correct" but I want to say it anyway! I believe that learning is central to a child's future success and wellbeing and have worked my entire adult life in schools promoting that belief. **However**, it is also my fundamental belief that central to *anyone's* wellbeing is the quality of the life that they live and for me a cornerstone in that quality comes from making memories. And memories for all of us are going to be long lasting, outliving lockdown and perhaps even corona virus itself.

Memories are made by spending quality time together; by making snowmen when the chance comes, by splashing through puddles on your daily walk, by being brave enough to let your child help you to prepare the evening meal, by watching a favourite movie or TV show, as well as doing **whatever you can manage** to help them with their learning.

So, I encourage all of our dedicated, loving parents not to worry too much if you're not managing "3 hours minimum" home learning a day (which incidentally is guidance given to schools, not to parents) but to concentrate on making sure you are making memories with your children – for their sake and for yours too. Perhaps that way, we will all keep our sanity until the madness of Covid 19 passes.

Yours sincerely,

N J WRIGHT
Chief Executive Officer / Executive Head Teacher
Endeavour Schools Trust