



## Woodborough Church of England Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Brewis

19<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents

### School Update and Forward Planning

Further to our brief communication on Friday evening, thank you for the immense support that we have received and your patience in awaiting a further update. I am sure you will understand that since the fire, much has been happening and many parties continue to be involved. As such, we wanted to be able to draw together as much information as possible in order to provide you with a more comprehensive update on the school and our immediate plans going forward.

The main damage to the school building is in the older, original part of the school; Maple and Cherry classrooms are unusable as are the staff room and Beech room – our staff planning and resource space. The school hall, Oak classroom, Sycamore classroom, Elm, Lime and Willow classrooms have not suffered fire damage and the building surveyor has confirmed we can use those spaces with some modification to entry and exit points. Considerable teaching resources have been lost. During the fire the electrical system was extensively damaged; an electrician has surveyed the school and indicated that it should be possible to restore power to the usable parts of the school. The fire investigation has yet to be completed but early indications are that the cause of the fire cannot be reliably established.

Currently restoration of power is pivotal to our planning because our preferred plan is to keep all our pupils at Woodborough within our usable buildings, with perhaps the addition of some temporary accommodation. We feel strongly that this is the best option for our whole school community and we are working very hard to achieve it. There is uncertainty at this stage because of availability of materials needed to restore power and access to the damaged area of the school.

In the event that we cannot restore power within the forthcoming week, we may be faced with moving pupils to other sites. We have had many offers of alternative accommodation which is really appreciated. We have some constraints that mean some options are not suitable, but we are confident we would find appropriate accommodation if we needed to take this option. Transportation to and from Woodborough would be arranged and we would keep classes together. In the unfortunate situation that we had to take this option, we would view it as short-term and would work to get pupils back onto the Woodborough site as quickly as possible.

We understand how disruptive closing the school is and we are working hard to accommodate our pupils as soon as possible. Realistically I must ask you to plan for pupils to be out of school for this coming week (Monday 20<sup>th</sup> – Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September). Class teachers will be in touch on Tuesday with some remote learning from Wednesday onwards and I will provide a further update as soon as possible.

We are very conscious that our school is absolutely not just about the buildings. The Woodborough magic is a culture that has seen us through adversity before and will do again. Our primary focus currently is the safety, welfare and education of our pupils in the near term. I have an excellent core emergency planning team around me, including Sarah Lowkis (CEO of Equa Trust), Sandra Reynolds (CFO Equa trust), our incredible Local Governing Body and Mrs Wren (deputy headteacher). We are also working very closely with Wiltshire Local Authority and Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education. They have all been excellent and together we will continue to work through the issues and rebuild step by step.

The offers of help and support have been overwhelming, thank you all. You will understand that we are currently unable to respond to everyone individually but please be aware of how very grateful we are. We will need help in the future, and we will reach out to you.

I am really pleased to confirm that the Year 4/5 residential visit to PGL Liddington will go ahead as planned. I am extremely grateful to Mrs Ashby, who has agreed to return from her very brief period of retirement and will take my place as a member of the staff team who will be accompanying the children.

Furthermore, I am delighted to say that the now re-named PTA Phoenix Colour Run will go ahead next weekend and we look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. We are sure it will provide everyone with a much-needed opportunity for our school community and supporters to come together.

Finally, it is extremely important to recognise the emergency services who worked at risk on Friday night to minimise the damage to our school and protect the adjoining property. I saw first-hand how hard they worked under dangerous conditions, and we are sincerely thankful to them.

Further updates will follow in due course. In the meantime, I'd like to thank you all once again for your enduring support for all members of our very special Woodborough School community and for one another.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Sarah Brewis, Headteacher



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