



The Firs

Lower School

25th April, 2019

Dear parents/carers,

School Closure on Thursday 2nd May, 2019

A text message was sent out today, to all parents, confirming the message sent out in a newsletter in February, concerning the closure of our school on Thursday 2nd May, due to the site being used as a polling station.

The school carried out a risk assessment in respect of the access to the polling station by members of the public coming onto the site to vote. Both The Firs and Alameda have increased numbers of pupils on site and the drive is now being used by Alameda school as the coach pick up and drop off point. There is also a higher volume of traffic for Kids Club and increasing numbers for Fordfield pick up at the end of the day. The school considered that the movement of vehicles by members of the public coming on to the site to vote at peak times, trying to use the car park/drive adds another layer of serious risk to pupil safety.

In light of light of this assessment and reflecting the fact that children's safety is of paramount importance to us, we reluctantly decided to take the decision to close the school.

European Elections on Thursday 23rd May, 2019

Our school is again being used for the European elections on Thursday 23rd May and we have contacted central Bedfordshire Council regarding the issue of the safety of our children during peak times. They have offered to provide security staff, to be on duty on the service road, to ensure no unauthorised vehicular access occurs at those peak times.

For this reason, we are very pleased to say that we will be able to remain open on Thursday 23rd May, while still accommodating the polling station.

Our School Being Used as Polling Station

Historically, The Firs has always been used as a polling station for local and national elections. In the past, before the changes described in the first section of this letter, it was possible to accommodate the polling station and still remain open. We are in communication with Central Bedfordshire Council, both to clarify the decision making process regarding the selection of polling stations and to ascertain if it is possible to have the same security support for future elections.

Although, we did inform parents in February about the closure, as early as we possibly could, we understand that parents sometimes miss items in the newsletter and we will endeavour in future to include reminders in subsequent newsletters, for key events such as this.

Adam J.G Campbell (Headteacher)

The Firs Lower School • Station Road, Ampthill, Bedford MK45 2QR

Telephone: (01525) 402735

Email: office@firslower.org • Web www.firslower.co.uk



We understand, that any closure of the school, not only interrupts children's learning, but also causes considerable inconvenience for parents and we always do our best to keep the school operating in times of difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

Adam Campbell
Headteacher