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**Head of School: Joan Wright**

25th March 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your patience and support during the past seven days. It has been a challenging week for the school; the governing body, the leadership team and all the staff however we know that it will have been equally difficult for many families trying to balance working lives around child care. Decisions to close any school are never taken without consideration of these consequences but we make them based on the best interests of the students.

I know many of you will have found the communication about events during this time frustrating, I can appreciate this and it is something we will review. Although I cannot change what has happened I would like to provide a brief explanation of the events of last week that might provide some context.

On Tuesday morning the boiler room, located underneath the school suffered a significant flood most likely caused by a rise in the water table. The fire service were called to pump out hundreds of thousands of litres of water. Late on Tuesday afternoon, the electricity provider advised that the electricity to the building be turned off so that an initial investigation of the supply to the school could be completed. The timeline for this investigation could not be determined and therefore I decided to close the school for the following day.

By Wednesday afternoon the initial investigation had concluded that significant damage had been done to the electricity panel in the boiler room meaning that it would need fully replacing and it would also be moved to the ground floor of the building to avoid this happening again. This work would take several weeks to complete but in the meantime the school could be connected to a generator. The advice received was that the school would not have electricity and heating and be safe for students until at least the following Monday, possibly longer. Therefore I closed the school for Thursday and Friday.

On Thursday the senior leadership team considered and investigated several contingency plans for the following week. Our original contingency plan was somewhat hampered by the fact that the damage to the electricity supply also effected the main building of Leek High school. By Thursday evening, Leek High school had electricity restored through a generator and the top

two floors of the Meadows had electricity restored though a separate generator. However, significant work had to be completed to the ground floor of the Meadows to reconnect that part of the building. We were advised that work would be ongoing through Friday and the weekend with the aim to restore electricity to the whole building by Monday morning and make the building safe for students. It was safe to have staff back in on the Friday as long as they worked only on the top two floors. Louise Smith, the School business manager, Geoff Finney, the site supervisor and myself were provided with updates throughout the weekend and visited the school several times. By Sunday afternoon we were given the confirmation that the school had electricity and would be safe to open.

We now enter the second phase of work which will be to reconnect the school building to the mains. This work is hoped to be completed during next weekend.

The challenge with keeping parents and carers up to date has been not only the limitations of what and how much we could send via text message or put on the website but also the uncertainty around the timelines. However, I do appreciate the frustration it has caused.

I would like to thank all those people who have worked day and night over the last few days to have the school in a position to open. I would like to thank the School business manager, site supervisor, the senior leadership team and other staff for their commitment and hard work during this time. Finally I would like to thank you, parents and carers for your support. Events like these are thankfully not common place but we will learn lessons for the future.

Yours sincerely



Mr Chris Best

Executive Headteacher

Springfield and The Meadows School