

21 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a very long and tiring term this has been for your children and staff alike. A term of nearly eight weeks has been hard on the children after lockdown and the summer holidays. I think it is very fair to say that we are all very tired and looking forward to half term snuggles on the sofa. Thank you so much for all of your support and help with keeping the school safe amid these scary times.

Breaking news as I write this is that Mrs Scott has phoned in showing symptoms this morning. She is going to go for a test and hopefully she will be fine. She has not been in school since last Friday, so there should be no contamination in school. Class 1 will be covered by Mrs Bacon for the rest of the week. Obviously, please continue to check your child for any signs of symptoms and if they are showing any signs of being unwell please can you keep them off school.

As you know our three classes are all in their own bubbles and we are trying desperately to keep staff cross contamination to a minimum. In light of some small schools in the region being totally shut down due to being small and staff sharing staffrooms etc, we now have three dedicated areas where bubble staff can make themselves a drink or food. Whilst keeping us all safe, this does mean that staff are now not only being asked to be on duty every break time and lunchtime, they are also not seeing other colleagues, which is not very good for mental health or wellbeing. The children do keep our spirits up though!

As the situation around us gets more and more critical, all of these safety measures will obviously stay in place. May I ask that parents try to socially distance in the car park at drop off and pick up times as much as you can do. I know it is incredibly difficult, but sometimes I can see groups of parents together who have children in all three of our bubbles, children that we have tried desperately to keep apart all day! One conversation in the carpark could literally shut down the whole school regardless of all of our safety measures!

It is pick up where the most crowding takes place, so after half term we will be sending out Class 1 five minutes earlier to try to ease the crowding a bit. Therefore, please can Class 1 parents pick up their children at 3.10pm prompt and then move away from the carpark swiftly. I know this causes problems for parents with children in different classes, but hopefully the majority of the crowding will disperse, leaving more space for other parents. Thank you so much for your patience with all of this, it is really hard to spot all parents and for each class teacher to know where their children have gone and who to. We are totally aware that you can be waiting for a while to get all of your children to you, but hope you will forgive us as safety must always come first.

Some small schools have also asked parents to wear masks during pick up. These schools have parents picking up from the playground though, not a public area. I don't know what you all think of this, but maybe it will be something we have to look at in the future. With Sheffield looking to go into Tier 3 imminently, I think half term has come at just the right time.

As you know, you all get to hear what is happening with schools at the same time as we do – no insider knowledge here! If the Government does decide to go for a national lockdown again, I think the current thinking would be schools would still be open. If they decide to keep children at home, then we will go to online teaching via the google classrooms again. Who knows? But in Baldrick's words....we have a cunning plan for all eventualities.

Traditionally, Parent's Evening Week is the second week after half term – week beginning Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November. All the staff are happy for parents to still come into school for a 'mask to mask', fully

sanitised meeting. If any parents would prefer not to do this, then a phone consultation can also be booked in for a mutually convenient time. Obviously, we will have to be very strict on timings and have a break in between slots for cleaning and sanitising, so please bear with us. Only one parent will be allowed to wait inside school at a designated area for each class, so timings will be critical. Obviously, we will not be able to run our usual crèche as we would be mixing bubbles, so no children on site please. If child care is a problem, please choose the telephone option. Sometimes, parents are offered times outside parent's evening week: again this year we won't be able to cater for this, as all staff look after afterschool care children from their bubble every day.

Wow....and this is before we start to unpick the impact this pandemic will have on the run up to Christmas.

Again, thank you so much for all your help and support. I am sorry that this update is full of doom and gloom and clamping down, but our situation is not getting any better is it?

Have a good half term and hopefully, fingers crossed, we will be back and ready to go on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.