

9 November 2020

Dear parent/carers

I hope this finds you well and you and your family are keeping safe in these restricted times.

Now winter is approaching it is important to remember the threat posed by the pandemic and that we must work together and remain vigilant.

Rates of infection across the West Midlands are still increasing. In light of this, the Trust has conducted a further review of its infection control measures across all schools. Updated government guidance issued to schools on 5 November 2020, has also been checked to ensure all precautionary requirements are met.

As schools will remain open it is vital that we all stick to the prescribed requirements and do our best to keep ourselves, our families and others as safe as possible.

As Chief Executive of the Trust, I want to reassure you that all staff continue to work really hard to make the school environment Covid-19 safe, ensuring no over-crowding during breaktimes and that children are able to socialise within their bubbles. This approach has resulted in little evidence of transmission of the virus within classrooms.

However, while our school buildings may be safe, it is also important for parents and carers to keep their distance while dropping off and collecting children. Schools have made arrangements so that there are not too many people outside the school gates, such as staggered arrival and collection times and only one adult accompanying children. In addition to this, we would like to take some extra precautions throughout the current lockdown.

Parental mask wearing and face covering

We are requesting that parents and carers support us by:

- wearing a mask or face covering when bringing children to school and collecting them at the end of the day
- ensuring a mask or face covering is worn if a parent/carers needs to enter the school playground or building for any reason (please note that in line with our Covid Visitors Policy no adult will be permitted to enter a school reception area unless they are wearing a mask or face covering)

- maintaining a safe distance of 2 meters from other parents when bringing and collecting children and also leaving the area quickly
- avoiding any car sharing between families on the school run as we know the virus can be easily passed on in such confined spaces

Ventilation in classrooms

We recognise the importance of keeping classrooms well ventilated. Over the winter months we will continue to keep as many windows open as possible and will be carefully monitoring the temperature in classrooms. As classrooms are likely to be slightly colder than usual we are asking parents to ensure children are wearing warm top layers e.g. additional fleece, cardigan or jumper. These warm top layers **do not** have to be school uniform.

Staff safety and wellbeing

We are working hard to ensure staff remain safe, well and able to come to work. For the period of lock down we are asking staff to wear face shields in the classroom for additional protection. This will be explained to children and will be reviewed on 2 December, 2020. You may wish to talk to your child about this change.

I can't emphasise enough how important it is to support us if we are to be able to keep as many children as possible consistently in school over the winter ahead. If you would like more information about the Trust's Covid-19 Strategy and Risk Assessment please visit your school website (see the Covid Tab) or the Trust's website www.drbignitemat.org

If you have any immediate concerns please speak to your headteacher. We will get through this, but we must all think of each other and work together.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Bowater

Trust CEO