Monday 4th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you all had an enjoyable Christmas break, even if it was slightly different to what we are all used to. Thank you from all the staff, for all of your generous cards and gifts for Christmas, they were much appreciated.

Tomorrow, Tuesday 5th January, we will be welcoming the children back to Old Stratford Primary School to start the Spring Term. As I am sure you have seen on the news, schools in Milton Keynes and other surrounding areas will move to remote learning due to the high level of COVID cases in the vicinity.

Being so close to the Milton Keynes border has increased the level of anxiety especially with some members of staff travelling across counties to get to work. However, I must give credit to the staff that they have remained positive and supportive in making sure that we provide education for as long as possible face to face and within the primary school setting.

As we know this new strain of COVID is 70% more transmissible than the previous strain therefore it is even more important that we adhere to strict restrictions so that we are able to keep the school open for as long as possible and drive down any infections that do occur before they spread.

Please see below a list of some reminders for parents and some new restrictions that have been put in place for everybody’s safety:

* All parents that come onto the school site to drop off or pick up children **must** wear a **facemask**.
* Parents **must not** cross the new blue lines at the gates at drop off times.
* Parents **must not** cross the new blue lines at the gates onto the playground until the gates are open at pick up time.
* Parents must leave the site **promptly** as soon as they drop off or pick up their child.
* Only **one** parent/carer is permitted to accompany a child onto the site.
* Please **do not** approach members of staff with messages. Please email the **office** with any messages so that they can be forwarded onto the appropriate person. (office@oldstratford.northants.sch.co.uk)
* Children must come to school organised with everything they need for the day. Forgotten items **must not** be dropped off at the office.
* Please arrive at school at your allocated time. Arriving early disturbs the flow and encourages gathering in limited space.
* Please pick up your child on time, we have had a number of children picked up late which causes disruption to the rest of the school.
* Children arriving on scooters or bikes must dismount before they enter the school gates.
* Children waiting to enter school must stand either on a cross or with an adult.
* If any member of your household are unfortunate enough to test positive for COVID you must inform the school **immediately** and isolate your whole household.
* If anybody in your household develop symptoms, you must isolate the whole family until a test result comes back negative.
* Due to children mostly being asymptomatic, if there is a positive case in the family, your child must test negative before returning to school after the isolation period.
* If a child tests positive and has been in contact with the rest of their class 48 hours before, the whole year group bubble will be asked to isolate for 14 days.
* Siblings of children in isolated class bubbles will not be asked to isolate unless somebody in their family develops symptoms.
* If a class bubble is asked to isolate, the class will move to remote learning within 24 hours.
* Please **do not** send your child into school if they are poorly or are ‘off colour’. Most children who are COVID positive do not have the same symptoms as adults and could just seem slightly unwell.

I understand how frustrating these restrictions can be and how unnatural it is not to be able to communicate directly with the person that your child is spending most of their day with. But we must dig deep and keep this up for a little longer until the vaccine is rolled out on mass and people in our school and wider community are protected and no longer at risk of serious illness.

Teachers and support staff are making changes too as their restrictions tighten. Masks will be worn in classrooms when close to children and in corridors and communal areas. Staff will not be able to mix at any time for breaks, planning or any other reason. Staff will not be able to walk freely around the school but must stay in their allocated area. Staff on gates will wear masks at all times.

Unfortunately, after school clubs will not be able to continue until cases in the area are lower however, Breakfast Club will still be available for the time being for those parents that need early morning childcare.

This is a challenging time for us all but I feel if we all work together as a community we can try to keep cases as low as possible within our school. Please remind your children before they come to school tomorrow about social distancing and what that means. Please let us know if you need help from the school in any way. Many families are struggling with changes in circumstances and we are here to help in whatever way that we can.

See you all tomorrow,

Best wishes,

Mrs Sarbutts