

Heaton Park Primary and Nursery School

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Dear Parents /Carers

I am writing in order to give some more clarity to events in school this week. As you will be aware we have had to close 3 classes and our nursery since the opening of school last week. This followed as a result of two members of staff having positive tests for COVID 19. The two cases are completely unrelated and were not a result of cross contamination in school between the staff members. The virus has also not been spread between the staff members as a result of transmission from siblings of children in those classes that are now closed.

At all times when a positive case is confirmed we immediately contact **Bury Infection Control** and they then inform us of what to do and this includes which classes should be closed and which staff should remain away from school. It is essentially down to who has had first contact for an extended period of time (over fifteen minutes) with the person who has been confirmed as positive and whether or not this was in close proximity. If this involves your child then the guidance is that they should then be isolated for a period of 14 days from the date of contact and this is in all respects not just remaining away from school. This is well-documented guidance from the British Government.

Siblings however can remain at school and the rest of the family does **not** have to isolate unless the isolating child or another family member exhibits symptoms. If this occurs then the family should obtain a test and isolate until results are received. If the test result is positive the school should be informed immediately and you should then act on advice given by Track and Trace. In short siblings can remain in school because they have not had first contact with the infected person.

As a rule children should not return to school within that 14 day period however we are aware that some parents will have real care issues if they have to pick up and drop off other siblings. If this is the case please ensure that the isolating child wears a face covering and remains as socially distanced as possible from others. This should only happen as a last resort.

School is following government guidance and this guidance is clear that social distancing is not going to be possible in schools and particularly primary schools. It also is clear in recognising that all schools are different and that procedures will be different in all settings. Our school is large and has well over 400 children and adults who attend. We have a limited number of spaces and playground areas and although we are implementing systems that aim to keep year groups separate, it is inevitable that crossover will at times occur. This would usually be at break times however; when the children are outside the risks are much less and crossover is always brief. It is also necessary for some adults to work across bubbles and this is unavoidable and again the guidance is clear on this.

Please be assured we are doing the very best we can to mitigate risk within our school both through social distancing as far as we can and high levels of hygiene across school. What people and families

Head Teacher **Mr P Lord**

do away from school is however another matter and we can do nothing about how people choose to behave in terms of infection control behaviours and how they choose to follow government rules, guidance and laws. All we can do is work together to do the right things to prevent further spread of the virus both in school and within the community.

I am also aware that lots of comments and rumours have been spread on social media recently. This is not helpful and can cause unnecessary anxiety amongst families and especially so when it is not true. We will always share the facts of events as soon as we know them and as soon as we can.

We are doing the very best we can under difficult and stressful circumstances and we will continue to review and change procedures when we see problems as we have done recently with our pick up and drop off routines.

Can I thank you all for your continued support and cooperation through these unprecedented times and on a final note the children have been exemplary in all aspects since we returned. I am only sorry that for some that was short lived and you should have been contacted with regards to home learning if your child is now at home.

Kind Regards

Mr P.J. Lord