

1st November 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you have all been keeping safe and well over the half term holiday and have enjoyed spending time with your families. I wanted to write to you to formally welcome you back to the start of second half of the autumn term at Shobnall Primary School but also because so much has changed in the past week with regards to the government's response to the coronavirus outbreak. Government guidance is revised and updated continuously so I wanted to summarise for you some of the key changes and how these affect schools, particularly our school, given the local and national context currently.

LOCAL COVID ALERT LEVEL

From Saturday 31 October 2020, Staffordshire was raised to the High Alert Level for Covid-19 to try and limit the spread of infection and stop the current rising rate of cases across the county. The main change is that it is now illegal for households in our area to mix indoors socially with others, unless part of a support bubble. This includes in people's homes and public indoor spaces. Schools remain open for all pupils as the government has prioritised children's education and wellbeing and is committed to helping working parents and guardians.

Our risk assessments and control measures have been revised over the holiday and robustly reviewed by the JTMAT Trust Board and our own Local Governing Body and as always, they will remain under constant review as our staff and pupil's health continues to remain our priority. There are no significant changes to our policies and procedures that we need to make you aware of but as a result of the local alert level changing, we **strongly advise** parents and carers to wear a **face covering** when dropping off and collecting their children from the school gates. Although this cannot be enforced by the school, please remember that the purpose of a face covering is to protect others and to stop the spread of the virus. It will provide a great sense of reassurance to others within the community and go some way to ensuring that our school remains a safe place and in bringing down the number of positive cases within our locality. Many thanks for your support with this, it will be much appreciated by everyone.

It is also important for us to remind everyone not to congregate in groups of more than one household indoors or more than six people outdoors, not to come into schools and educational settings if you are waiting for the results of a Covid-19 test and to continue to follow the law and government guidance. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/coronavirus although the main rules are summarised below:

- You must not mix socially with people you do not live with, in any indoor setting whether at home or, for example, a pub or restaurant, unless they are part of your support.
- You may continue to mix with people outdoors (including in a garden or park) but you must not meet in a group more than six, and you must follow social distancing rules.
- If you need to travel, you should aim to reduce the number of journeys you make where possible.

SECOND NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

Last night, the Prime Minister announced that a second national lockdown will begin on Thursday 5 November 2020 until Wednesday 2 December 2020, subject to a vote in Parliament this week. If sanctioned, this will see pubs, restaurants and non-essential shops shut and socialising between households banned indoors in all parts of England from Thursday. However, unlike in the previous lockdown **schools, colleges and universities will remain open**. As the PM said on Saturday night, this is because, *"Our senior clinicians still advise that school is the best place for children to be. We cannot let this virus damage our children's futures even more than it has already and I urge parents to continue taking their children to school,*



and I am extremely grateful to teachers across the country for their dedication in enabling schools to remain open.”

As far as we are aware, all of the current guidance remains the same (including mandatory attendance) but we are sure that the government will provide further guidance in the forthcoming days on what additional measures schools may have to take during this second lockdown period to remain open. We will, as ever, keep you informed and updated as and when any information is released. You may find it useful to refer to [what parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges in the autumn term](#), which will be updated when revised guidance is issued.

WHAT TO DO IF MY CHILD IS DISPLAYING SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

If anyone in your household becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), your child must not attend school and you will be advised to follow the [guidance for household with possible or confirmed \(COVID-19\) infection](#). This sets out that you must:

- Self-isolate for at least 10 days
- Arrange to have a [test to see if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

You may also find it useful to refer to the [letter from the Chief Nurse and Interim Chief Medical Officer of NHS Test and Trace on when parents and guardians should book a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) test for their child](#).

Please keep the school fully informed as swift action must be taken if we become aware that someone who has attended our school has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). We can only act on facts so speculation and rumour is unhelpful.

You should now have received instructions on how to activate your SeeSaw account should our remote learning procedures need to be applied to ensure learning can continue from home if necessary. This information can also be found on the [Covid-19 Info](#) page on our school website.

I hope that you find all of this information helpful as we continue to move through these unprecedented times. I have no doubt that I will be writing to again this week, so please ensure you continue to check all of your communication channels. Our strength of community will continue to see us through and please sleep easy in the knowledge that our school will always ensure that your children are at the heart of everything we do. As always, our aim is to keep the children, staff and you as safe as possible.

As always, take care of each other and stay safe. We look forward to seeing you on **Tuesday 3 November 2020**.

Many thanks and kind regards,

Mr D. Adams
Head Teacher