



# Midsomer Norton Primary School

*'Part of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership'*

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## Places at School

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will be aware from the news that concerns remain about continued high rates of transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Unfortunately, there have been mixed messages from the government which have placed schools in a very difficult situation whereby many more children were eligible for spaces than before. This does not though mean that school is the best place for your child if you can make alternative arrangements. The government has belatedly acknowledged this and on Friday evening amended its guidance to state that even 'parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can'.

We want to do all that we can to support families and the critical work that is being carried out by our parents to help our country fight this virus. Many of our parents work for the NHS and care homes carrying out frontline critical care. We want to ensure that children in school are not in any way disadvantaged by being in school rather than in the safe sanctuary of their home.

Equally, we know how difficult it is to support home learning and we want to do all that we can to make this as easy as possible. The difficulty for schools is that the more adults who are in school, the fewer adults can support remote learning.

I urge you to please consider the following:

- Parents are able to form childcare bubbles with another family. This would reduce the number of families mixing whilst also allowing parents to work (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-childcare-bubble-with-another-household>)
- 31% of the children on our school roll have requested a space. Whilst we are mitigating risks to the best of our ability, it is obviously safer for children to be at home and mixing with no other families or with just one childcare bubble family.
- Higher numbers of children at school, increases the risk of transmission ultimately to family members at home.
- If and when we have further positive cases of Covid-19 at school, we will have to shut affected bubbles. This will impact all those key worker families plus our support staff and their families due to the stretched staffing at school.
- Having children attend part-time rather than full-time would also help reduce numbers in school and therefore likelihood of transmission.
- Children learning at home are being taught the same curriculum content as those learning in school.

We must prioritise those children who are vulnerable and where both parents are on the frontline. Please do not be offended if we have asked you to reconsider a request for a place.

If you no longer require your place in school, or you wish to reduce or increase the number of sessions your child is attending, please contact the school office with the update. We are very grateful to all our critical and frontline workers and are proud to be able to do our best for your children whilst they need to be in school.

Best wishes,

Alun Randell  
Head Teacher

