





## Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

There is currently no requirement to teach children in bubbles and classes can be combined if there are staffing issues in school. There are one or two other issues that I would also like all parents and carers to be aware of.

1. School meal provision is likely to be difficult if staffing levels fall. We will notify parents and carers about this if it occurs and it may be necessary to provide cold meals only if too many catering staff are absent.
2. Trips will currently still run and be subject to additional risk assessment. The Government guidance on trips will be used if we need to postpone or cancel any visits. Foreign trips are still due to run as well at this stage, but may well be postponed following travel updates. For example, you can now no longer travel through France to reach a third country for a holiday or a trip.
3. Please do try and avoid visiting school sites unless absolutely necessary, as this will help reduce the spread of the virus.
4. Please do continue to send children into school if they have minor ailments. Provided they do not have the common Coronavirus symptoms, children should do their best to be in school, even if they feel a little under the weather. Studies show that those children that miss a lot of school struggle to catch up and in some cases can suffer with mental health problems. **It is also worth mentioning that we are experiencing an increased number of the usual sickness bugs and common cold infections in schools across the Trust. This was expected, as children have not been mixing as much and therefore have lower immune systems.**
5. I am already aware of some schools that have teachers and support staff with Coronavirus who will miss the first week of term. Therefore, please do be understanding with school settings as they try to manage staff absence.
6. Children aged between 5 and 12 who are classed as vulnerable, will be eligible for a Coronavirus vaccine. Contact regarding this will come directly to you from the NHS.
7. I anticipate another round of school-based vaccinations for eligible secondary-aged children, but have yet to receive details of this. Given the previous shortages of staff and vaccines when schools were part of the programme, I would advise parents to book vaccines at local centres to ensure children can be fully protected as soon as possible.

Individual schools will contact you with local arrangements for testing, etc in due course if they have not done so already.

Thank you again for your continued support and understanding.

Best regards

Alun Williams  
CEO

