



# Birches First School

## Believe, Grow, Succeed



12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

We're nearly at the end of what has been the most challenging of terms for our school and community. I would like to thank you and your children for all the support and engagement you have offered as we have successfully navigated through these times together.

We really have achieved and developed so much in such a short space of time (I think all our computing skills have certainly developed and been tested(!) over the past weeks). The pace at which the teachers have been working is phenomenal, preparing and teaching recorded remote lessons, then delivering 'face to face' has been very demanding and challenging. I can honestly say it has been the toughest teaching time I have seen over my 20 years. They certainly deserve a rest over the half term and recognition of their efforts as always.

Equally, I must show recognition to the rest of our Birches team, the Cleaners, Cooks, Lunchtime Supervisors, Admin staff, Site Supervisor and Teaching Assistants, who have continued to work through the school closure... T H A N K Y O U! They have continued to make school a safe and welcoming place for children who must attend.

As the half term approaches, I do have to communicate the measures we have to take should any of our pupils test positive for Covid-19.

### **If your child has attended school:**

#### **From Saturday 13th February to Monday 15th February**

In essence, the actions you need to take as a parent during the above dates should your child test positive, are very straightforward. Please contact me directly via email [headteacher@birches.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@birches.staffs.sch.uk) and include a mobile contact number. You do not need to contact any other member of staff.

I will then communicate directly with you and ensure the school takes the appropriate action.

#### **From Tuesday 16th February to Sunday 21st February**

Of course, we still need to know of positive cases after 15<sup>th</sup> February. Obviously, should your child need to isolate we need to be made aware and support you with appropriate schoolwork from the start of the new term.

However, for cases that occur between 16<sup>th</sup> February and 21<sup>st</sup> February, please simply notify the office, [office@birches.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@birches.staffs.sch.uk), informing us of the date of the test and the return date of your child. No other member of staff needs to be contacted. We will respond once we re-open on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February.

**If your child has not attended school:**

Please contact the school on [office@birches.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@birches.staffs.sch.uk) to inform us of a positive case as you would do in term time.

As you are aware, the Prime Minister 'hopes' schools will reopen on March 8<sup>th</sup>, I do not have any information at this time to communicate whether this will/will not happen. I do know there **should** be further information on our return after half term, when this is released I will make the necessary procedures and plans and inform you as soon as they are finalised.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very happy, safe and enjoyable half-term. Have a worthy rest from school! Take time to play board games, cards, make crafts and exercise... keep away from electronic devices as much as possible...it is a huge concern of mine the amount of screen time the children have been exposed to recently.

Take care, stay safe...see you all soon (hopefully in the flesh, not virtually!)

Best wishes

S Varricchione

Headteacher