



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed

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Dear Parents

I recognise that you appreciate how hard the Birches Staff Team have continued to ensure that Government guidance and measures are implemented to protect all children, parents and staff.

I would like to sincerely thank the vast majority of parents who wear masks when on the school premises and adhere to the 2 meter social distancing guidance. Unfortunately, I have received some complaints from parents regarding the lack of social distancing by some parents. Further to this, gatherings of parents around school grounds and particularly by the school gates both before and after school. Rightly so, parents have informed me that their actions increases the chance of infection and the virus spreading.

I am writing once again to ask for your co-operation with wearing face masks and adhering to the 2 meter social distancing rules whilst in and around the school site. We have some very vulnerable parents/grandparents and we truly must be committed to assisting them to feel safe whilst on our grounds by following these simple rules.

Secondly, over the last week we have seen a rise in children with sickness and temperatures. Please **do not** send your child to school if they are unwell, not only is it unfair to the other children who may 'catch' their illness, it is certainly not fair on the child feeling ill to come to school and be expected to be alert and give 100% to their work-we all know when we're under the weather we need TLC and rest!

I would like to remind you if your child displays any one or more of the following symptoms it is advised by the government to have them tested:

1. A high temperature: any new high temperature where your child feels hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure the temperature)
2. A new continuous cough: coughing a lot more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours.
3. A loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste: a noticeable loss of smell or taste or things smell and taste differently to normal.

If you are unsure whether to have your child tested, please check the official list of symptoms on the NHS website, which is reviewed regularly: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/

If your child or anyone in the household is asked to self-isolate, please ensure that they remain at home for the full 10 days and do not leave the house.

Regular rapid testing is now available for parents, their households and support or childcare bubbles. The government is encouraging all families to participate in twice weekly testing to help stop the spread.

Parents and other adults in the household can access tests by:

- Ordering tests online www.gov.uk/order-school-household-tests
- Getting an assisted test at work, if it is available
- Attending a test site to get tested (where you will be able to see how to take the test) or pick up tests to do at home.

Again, I thank you for all your efforts during this pandemic and for continuing to support us in providing a safe environment for all our stakeholders.

If anyone would like any further information or to discuss any of the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes

S Varricchione

Headteacher