

Mugginton Church of England Primary School



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November Update for Parents

Welcome back, everybody! Sadly, most of this update will focus on our ongoing response to the coronavirus pandemic which is necessary after the announcement of a new lockdown from Thursday—a brief review of recent published data on Covid is set out inside which I hope gives you a better understanding of how and why we have prepared and updated the policies/risk assessments for 2020. In addition, there is a reminder about how school will respond and alert you in the event of somebody in our community testing positive for coronavirus and also information about what your child will be learning this half-term.

The new Half-Term

I would like to thank our amazing staff for the creative and sensible ways they managed to offer parents' evening appointments which should have been a useful update for you on your child's progress. In December, a Progress Update sheet similar to the form you received at parents evening will be shared with you. Please let me know if you have any questions about your child's academic progress.

We are delighted that Mrs Wallen has been able to return to work this term. The children were delighted to see her and it has given everybody a real boost to have her back. Debbie is still only part-way through her recovery from knee surgery so she will be unable to be outside on the playground before, during and after school. We hope she will be able to return and play an integral role in the staff football team from September 2021!

We would like to welcome Mr Wraith to Mugginton in his new role in the junior class. I am sure the transition from 'Paul' to 'Mr Wraith' will take a little getting used to but we are delighted to have him with us and the children can only benefit from a new member of staff with Paul's experience and talent.

Unfortunately, I remain unable to confirm with you our plans for the usual Christmas events which are so special for everybody. Truth be told, I am pessimistic about our ability to hold a Nativity this year and feel the same concerning important church events such as the Christingle. Thank you for your patience during such a fluid time.

Coronavirus and Schools

In my typically jaundiced manner, the bad news first! It comes as a surprise to nobody in education that opening schools in September resulted in a greater number of positive covid cases, even when controlling for the increased number of tests. The Office for National Statistics Coronavirus Infection Survey from 30th October reported that on the 1st September, the rate of Covid Infection for primary aged children was 110 in 100,000. By the 23rd of October the rate was 1040 in 100,000, a 9-fold increase. The increase was 50-fold in secondary schools, from 40 in 100,000 to 2010 in 100,000. The ONS concluded that by 30th October, approximately 1.04% of primary aged children and 2.01% of secondary aged children had coronavirus. The age-group with the highest infection rate was 16-24 year olds with approximately 2.3% testing positive.

NHS Test and Trace data indicated that in the week to 22nd October, 10,036 'common locations' (places more than one person who tested positive had been) were reported. Supermarkets were the most common location (11.2% of total), followed by pubs/bars (7.4%), restaurants/cafes (7%) and then secondary schools (6.8%) and primary schools (5.7%). In short, supermarkets, hospitality and schools make up a large proportion of the locations where coronavirus is spread. Interestingly, despite the wide-scale media coverage, universities accounted for only 1.2% of the common locations identified by Test and Trace.

The data demonstrate, unequivocally, that opening schools results in a greater number of coronavirus cases, particularly when community transmission is high. It should come as surprise to nobody that 22% of schools in Derbyshire have experienced positive cases since reopening in September and I am glad that local friends and former families of ours are getting back to health—they have all of our love and support.

The Good News!

Despite this, I believe more strongly now than I did in June that primary schools must remain open. At a local level, the evidence to this point suggests that our covid measures, whilst unobtrusive, have had an effect and we have had no positive cases, although it would not be a surprise were one to be reported.

Whilst outbreaks in schools do sometimes occur, the evidence from national and international studies is that only a small percentage of the school population becomes ill. In other words, they are not 'superspreader' events. In Italy, for example, 65,000 schools reopened in September and 1212 campuses experienced outbreaks. However, of these, 93% of them reported only a single case of covid. Only 1 school reported more than 10 cases (Buonsense et al, 2020). The situation is similar in Victoria, Australia where 91% of school outbreaks reported fewer than 10 cases (Russell et al, 2020). More data has been published which suggests that it is adults in schools who contract coronavirus before children do: in England only 2 of 30 outbreaks in schools in June involved pupil-pupil spread (Ismail et al, 2020).

The evidence strongly indicates that children under 12 are less likely to become infected and less likely to spread the virus than older children and adults (Viner, 2020; Otte im Kampe et al, 2020). In the United States, the rate of infection is twice as high in children aged 12–17 years as it is among 5–11-year-olds (Leeb et al, 2020).

What does it mean?

The data indicate that, yes, there is a risk to opening primary schools, particularly to staff. However, the risk of infection is low particularly when it is considered that up to 50% of children infected with covid-19 develop no symptoms (Waterfield et al, 2020). This risk can be further ameliorated by good hygiene practices, ventilated rooms, adult-to-adult social distancing and frequent testing, all things we continue to have in place. Thank you to Mr Tompkins for sharing some excellent journal articles with me—it is much appreciated!

I remain grateful to all of our parents for the manner in which you have responded to concerns about Covid-19 and your child. The balancing of your child's and everybody's health and their need to be in school is so difficult and I am glad we have been able to navigate such decisions as a team, which will always be mine and staff's goal. With this in mind, below is a table from the World Health Organisation which I have borrowed from the BBC website. Speaking as a Father, I have found this a quite useful tool when making difficult decisions about whether or not to send my children to school.

Symptoms	Coronavirus	Flu	Cold
 Fever	Common	Common	Rare
 Cough	Common	Common	Mild
 Loss of taste and smell	Sudden	Rare	Sometimes
 Fatigue	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
 Headaches	Sometimes	Common	Rare
 Aches and pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
 Runny/stuffy nose	Rare	Sometimes	Common
 Sore throat	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
 Sneezing	No	No	Common
 Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No	No
 Diarrhoea	Sometimes for children	Sometimes, especially for children	No

In the Event of a Positive Test

A detailed breakdown of how we will respond to a positive covid test is set out in an update from last half-term. In short, school will close to all pupils (a single bubble) for the remainder of that week at least. Provided staff are well enough, the Mighty Mugginton blog will be updated within 24 hours of you being alerted to the positive test and we will aim to run daily English and Maths lessons via Zoom alongside the blog activities until school is safe to reopen to everybody.

The Curriculum

Remembrance Sunday is this Sunday the 8th and ties in closely with our theme of 'We Will Remember'. I am pleased to confirm that tennis can go ahead for the second group of juniors on Mondays as planned. Individual photographs will still be taken on Wednesday 18th November.

Theme / focus

This term we will focus on our first Golden Rule: 'Treat Others how you would like to be Treated'. We have arranged some exciting activities with the National Justice Museum and will mark anti-bullying week (Monday 16th November) with a range of workshops and activities focusing in particular on the lunch hour.

The Juniors

This half-term, the juniors will be reading *The Umbrella Mouse* by Anna Fargher. We will read excerpts from Anne Frank's diary and learn about the Jewish Faith. We will create moving vehicles linked to WWII using our electricity/circuit knowledge.

In Mathematics we will continue to practise Number Club and the four number operations which we covered in half-term one. We will spend the first three weeks learning about percentages and fractions.

The Infants

The infants and children in the middle group will read *The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark* by Jill Tomlinson and *The Lion and the Unicorn* by Shirley Hughes. They will read and write poetry linked to the seasons and seasonal events and explore the life and times of Rosa Parks before Christmas takes over!

In Mathematics, the children will continue to consolidate their number work from term one before moving onto division, multiplication and simple fractions and number problems.

Selected Key Dates

Mon 4th Jan	INSET DAY
Weds 3rd Feb	Full Governing Body Meeting
12th Feb	End of Term Service
Mon 22nd Feb	INSET Day
Thurs 1st April	Easter Service
Mon 10th May	Year Six SATS Week
Fri 25th June	INSET Day
Mon 28th June	INSET DAY
Thurs 22nd July	Leavers' Service