



Bussage C. of E. (Aided) Primary School
The Ridgeway, Bussage, Stroud, Glos.
GL6 8FW

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Dear Parents,

This is the final letter of the week. It has been a busy week of communication with you, but I feel at this time that it is important to keep parents informed of any developments.

Football Success: Congratulations to the football team for winning the Stroud football tournament. They will now go on to represent our area in the County Finals next term.

COP 26: As many of you know the global dimension and sustainability of our planet is one of the 'Golden Threads' running through our curriculum. The children will all be involved in some work surrounding COP 26 during the first two week back after half term in conjunction with the event. More on this will follow.

COVID – 19: All South West local authority areas are in areas of rapidly rising infection and therefore triggering thresholds for additional action. To ensure consistency, South West Directors of Public Health have jointly agreed advice that their schools can implement additional COVID19 response measures as proportionate or necessary.

Situation Summary

- The South West is experiencing the impact of national rising case rates and the impact of increased transmission arising from false negative PCR results.
- SW case rates have increased sharply against the national average and are expected to continue to rise.
- The majority of cases are in school age groups. There is evidence of this being passed on to adults.
- Over 60 rates are rising steadily. Hospital Admissions for COVID19 have increased.

Given the evidence of spread of infection in pupils and the impact on staffing across South West educational settings since term began, we are being advised to review contingency plans and consider bringing in precautionary, sensible measures for the first two weeks after half term.

I am now permitted to encourage parents to consider regularly testing their primary aged children using Lateral Flow Tests. I know many of you have been using these tests regularly for some time anyway and I am grateful to you for this. As infection rates in the area rise, I would encourage Lateral Flow Tests for as many of our children as possible. Staff have been doing Lateral Flow Tests twice a week for some time now in a bid to keep us all safe.



I don't know the level of social mixing which is going to take place over half term. Here at Bussage, we have always tried our best to remain ahead of the curve and act quickly. We have seen a remarkably low infection rate compared to many other settings and as I mentioned in my previous letter, we intend to do everything we can to try and maintain this.

Whilst, we are nowhere near the thresholds to trigger further action, in consultation with staff, I intend to 'tweak' our operational arrangements in the first **two weeks** back after half term as we look to see how the situation unfolds locally. **There will be no change to the start or finish of the school day** at the moment, and indeed most of the changes will only affect the internal running of the school. I am informing you because I think parents should know how the school is responding to this fast moving situation.

The main change will be surrounding large gatherings within school. We will:

- dispense with any gatherings of pupils for assemblies (including work of the week) and the school hall will once again be segregated by screens and permanently set up for lunch time arrangements
- Stagger our lunch times. Rainbows, Y1, Y2, and Y3 will have lunch from 12.00 -1.00pm, whilst Y4, Y5 and Y6 will have lunch from 12.30 – 1.30pm
- re-introduce the requirement for visitors into school to wear face coverings in communal areas
- run Breakfast Club and After School Club as normal
- delay the start of the following clubs until possibly Monday 15th November
 1. Coding with Mr Mills
 2. Young Voices with Mrs White, Mrs West and Mrs Baldwin
 3. Brilliant Book Club with Mrs Seymour
 4. Beginners Spanish with Mr Haydock
 5. Art Club with Mrs Howe

Cross Country and **Forest School** on Thursday are outdoor activities and these **will** start as planned straight after half term. Children in those clubs will get changed (supervised) in their individual classrooms.

As you can imagine, we will keep this under constant review and communicate any changes as speedily as we can.

I also want to remind everyone that the vaccination programme represents the very best protection for us all and for keeping our school open. Those eligible for a 'jab' should get one.

Child Protection: Following a recent audit, it has been recommended that I alert parents to the NSPCC Helpline for reporting harassment or violence in schools. This is **0800 136663**

Our most recent Child Protection Policy is available on the website.

And finally: We reach the end of another tricky term. I think it is likely that next term will be equally challenging. Whilst nobody can be sure of the next phase, I would urge everyone to be prepared for other measures such as staggered starts and finishes to the school day to be implemented very quickly if the need arises.

Thank you.

Kind regards

A Ferguson
Head Teacher