

Dear Parents and Carers

Just over two weeks ago Uplands Junior School opened to all staff and pupils for the new academic year. We were pleased to see all but a handful of pupils return. I know many of you were reassured by the safety measures put in place last term and the communication and support made available to you by Mrs Webster-Smith and the team. Once again Uplands is a vibrant school with plenty of activity albeit in limited spaces.

I am pleased to hear that the new Year 3 pupils have settled well in their classes despite having had only a very limited opportunity to visit the school last July. Children across all year groups are enjoying being back in a routine with friends and teachers and are on the whole coping well with new social distancing routines. After an initial focus on mental health and wellbeing, normal curriculum lessons have resumed and teaching staff are introducing a variety of initiatives to help pupils cover missed learning from last term. Teachers have also reviewed home learning resources. These have been enhanced for pupils who are told to isolate with the introduction of Google Classrooms. So far this has worked well.

Unfortunately, this week we have seen an escalation of Covid-19 cases in Wolverhampton and that has impacted on Uplands. We would like to assure parents that Uplands continues to review measures to help minimise contact across bubble groups and we are working with the Local Authority and under the guidance of the DfE to maintain a safe but enjoyable learning environment for our pupils.

Understandably, parents have concerns about school attendance. You will have seen that Uplands is trying to do everything it can to maintain a level of normality for children during these unsettled times. Their mental wellbeing is a top priority for us and we thank staff for the incredible work they are doing under exceptional circumstances. Please support this by continuing to send your child to school unless instructed to do otherwise.

As you can imagine, this dynamic situation is placing a lot of pressure on Uplands' staff. The Leadership Team and office staff in particular are fielding a lot of concerns and queries and at the same time are having to deal with a wealth of official guidance and data collection. This is in addition to their regular duties. As Governors, the wellbeing of our staff is important to us and at the same time we want to ensure essential information is not missed. I would like to reinforce Mrs Webster-Smith's request that you please only contact school if it is urgent and this is best done by phoning the school office. General queries can usually be dealt with by class teachers at the school gate.

We all need to work together to support our school and community so please help stop the spread of Coronavirus by following government and local rules and continue to encourage your child to wash their hands more often, follow school social distancing rules and stay in their bubble group.

On behalf of the board of Governors thank you for your understanding and support during these challenging times.

Kindest regards,

Debbie Anslow

Chair of Governors