

15th October 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Thank you to those of you who have commented on how you appreciate these updates.

I can confirm that there remain no positive cases of COVID 19 within the school community- children or staff. Nevertheless, a few pupils are having to self-isolate because a family member is being tested for Covid-19. We continue to follow guidance from Dorset Council and Public Health England in these matters and I will keep all parents/ carers informed.

Clearly nationally we are at a period of uncertainty as we see the rate of infection growing. We will continue to do all we can to bring some normality into our students' lives whilst of course taking due regard to the precautions we must take to keep us all as safe as possible. Please continue to reinforce with your child the key principles of wearing a face covering in busy places, including lesson changeover for children in KS3 only (unless exempt in line with the Government's guidelines), the need to wash hands and/ or use hand sanitiser regularly and maintain social distancing.

Please make sure that your child has his/her face covering and sanitiser ready for the new school week. These sometimes get forgotten especially when children come to school in PE kit so we would value your support with this. In school our Covid-19 risk assessment is implemented robustly with any visitor such as a parent, contractor, colleague from Dorset Council or health care practitioner required to wear a face covering whilst indoors and socially distance at all times. The robustness of our risk assessment measures in place may be linked to why we have still had no confirmed cases amongst staff or pupils.

If your child is having to self-isolate please make sure we know this when you report his/ her absence using office@westmoorsmid.dorset.sch.uk. It is important that we also know if your child subsequently develops symptoms or has to take a test and the outcome of it. If any child is having to self-isolate then they should now find work posted on our VLE, the ITS Learning Platform, in all their subjects.

After half term, we will be offering a virtual workshop via Microsoft Teams, to parents/ carers on how to support your child's learning at home on Thursday 5th November 2020 from 16.00-17.00- more information will follow. I appreciate that there is a degree of anxiety being felt regarding the use of assessments during the year. At the start of term the main reason for assessing children was to find out where they were and to identify gaps in their learning to enable us to tailor provision to meet our children's needs. We are confident that year 6 pupils will be sitting exams in the summer of 2021 (although these may be slightly later than normal) as well as GL assessments in each year groups. There is absolutely no need for our children to feel worried: our staff are very well placed to support them, and they will achieve their potential if they continue to work hard.

A letter for parents/ carers will follow shortly, enabling you to sign up to attend a virtual parents evening slot, after school, on either Tuesday 17th November 2020 or Wednesday 18th November to enable you to talk to your child's tutor. An option for a telephone appointment will be possible for any parents/ carers if they would prefer.

As you will know, we have asked children to come to school in PE kit on the day that they have their PE lesson. PE lessons may be inside or outside and so it is important that children dress appropriately for inclement weather and then be comfortable for the rest of the day sat in lessons. Kit worn to school must however conform to the published PE kit list with a school jumper being worn over the top. We are concerned at the increasing variation in kit being worn to school. Tracksuit bottoms should be black or sports leggings plain black with no stripes or logos. Children should not be wearing any kinds of hoodies to school and I would greatly value your support in ensuring that children wear the correct uniform. I have been informed that Stevensons have now reopened and their online ordering service is also in operation.

For all children who cycle or use scooters to get to school, please can I ask you to reiterate the importance of them wearing their helmets, being vigilant at all times and stopping correctly at any junction to check for any cars/ motorbikes

etc. before turning right or left. I am very conscious that there is more traffic on the roads these days and I want to ensure that we do all we can to keep our children safe.

Our virtual PTFA meeting is being held at 18.00 on Wednesday 21st October 2020 via Microsoft Teams. Whilst their fundraising activities, as a result of Covid-19, have had to be curtailed for the coming term (as we are unable to hold our annual Christmas craft fair), the committee members are already thinking about new fundraising opportunities and events for later in the year. Further information will also be going out shortly about our forthcoming parent governor elections. We are particularly keen to recruit governors with financial expertise although other skills are also of course welcome. More important still is a commitment to supporting the school and helping us move forward.

I commend both the PTFA and governing body as ways in which you can show your practical support for your child's education and would like to thank everyone for their contribution to the school to help our children.

Wishing you and your family well.

Dr Deborah Craddock



Headteacher