



Wednesday 18th March 2020

Dear Parents/carers

I hope this letter finds you well during these difficult times. I am continuing my self-isolation in accordance to government guidelines and hope to return to school next Wednesday 25th March.

We have decided to introduce staggered dropping off and pick up times from tomorrow, Thursday 19th March 2020. This is to reduce large groups of parents gathering at the gates and in the playgrounds minimising any risk. It is noted that during these points during the day we can have over 200 parents leaving and entering the school site at the same time! Recent Government advice is to reduce social gatherings as much as possible.

Below are the proposed times for each year group.

8:45am -11:15am Nursery am

12:00pm – 2:30pm Nursery pm

9:00am -2:40pm Reception

9:15am -2:55pm Year 1

9:30am -3:10pm year 2

If you have children in two separate year groups please drop both of them off at the later time and collect them at the earlier time to reduce your time waiting in the playground. e.g. A family with a Reception child and year 2 child come in at 9:30am and get collected at 2:40pm (this would ensure that neither of them would be left without friends in the classroom which can be distressing for our children)

We believe that having a fifteen minute stagger between each year group should reduce the amount of adults waiting in our outside area. We will ensure that these times are adhered to by staff so that parents do not have to wait on the playground for any length of time.

We will continue to do our best to keep the school open but with a significant number of staff absent, it may become impossible to continue to run the school as normal. For this reason, it may become necessary for us to partially or fully close the school, even if the government has not made a decision to close all schools. We will do everything to avoid a full closure, however, if staff levels are too low to ensure children are safe, we will be left with no choice but to consider this option. We will let you know as and when current arrangements have to change.

We are extremely grateful that parents are making those difficult decisions before setting off to school, to self-isolate their families when coughs and high temperatures have become apparent. We are also thankful to those parents, as this selflessness is keeping the rest of the school community safe and allowing us to stay open as much as is practicable.



When symptoms have first appeared in children while they have been at school we have had to make medical judgements about whether a child should attend, and regrettably we have had to send children home in order to follow government guidance. Currently this is to self-isolate for 14 days. We do this in the best interests of the whole school community.

As a school community, our biggest concern is that if the school has to close how our most vulnerable families will cope, especially those families who are not in secure work or on zero hours contracts who by self-isolating face extreme hardship. We are also concerned for those families where children are already entitled to free school meals and families where a parent is deployed. Please contact the school by email at admin@montgomery-inf.essex.sch.uk or myself at head@montgomery-inf.essex.sch.uk if you are affected by this in anyway and we will do our utmost to support you.

We desperately want to be able to step up to support parents who find themselves in financial hardship due to the Coronavirus, and we are doing this by offering to provide Food Bank Vouchers and are looking into other ways we might be able to support our most vulnerable families.

We would like to make a plea at this time to the people of our community to remember the Colchester Food Bank. While everyone is buying all the supplies that they need to cover a period of self-isolation, we ask that you think of others too, and that if at all possible, and you can afford to do so, please donate to the Food Bank in Colchester.

The school website is currently being updated with advice for parents during the COVID-19 outbreak, the information Can be found here <https://www.montgomery-inf.essex.sch.uk/parents/parent-advice-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/>

Thank you for your continued support and understanding during these difficult times.

Sue Bridgeman

Headteacher