

Saturday 7th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Ecclesall Primary School children,

As this is now the third year group bubble that has had to self-isolate since September 2020, I felt it important to explain the decision making process and how each situation can be different, whether a staff member or child in the year group. As a school we have not had any clusters or outbreaks of Covid-19 associated with each of the positive cases. We are working extremely hard to ensure school remains as Covid secure as possible and we react rapidly and proportionally in each case to reduce the risk to children, their families and staff.

We informed parents and carers in July and September through our Update letters that we work in class and year group bubbles at Ecclesall Primary School. It has also regularly been detailed on our risk assessments from version 1 to version 9 and all have been through our Governing body and then approved by Health and Safety and Public Health at Sheffield City Council.

Some parents have suggested we work in “class bubbles” rather than year group bubbles and state that some other schools work like this. Whilst we work closely with other schools in our locality, each school is individual and have put in place measures that suit them and their own, unique circumstances. There is little point in comparing schools and we are not in a position to comment on what other schools have put in place and the decisions that they have made. At Ecclesall, we simply do not have the funding.

At Ecclesall Primary, our decision to create year group bubbles has been taken for a wide range of reasons following extensive risk assessment and in line with guidance from the Government, Public Health England and the Department for Education. These have primarily been made so the school can continue to provide as normal an experience as possible for our children whilst in school, weighed up against the impact of isolating year group bubbles. All our staff work across one year group bubble and no more than two year group bubbles including our lunchtime supervisors to minimise the risk as much as possible. Our TAs work with individuals, groups of children across all three classes in and out of the classroom and all have a lunchtime duty with their year group bubble. Our Reception year group bubble had to self-isolate from yesterday as it was a Teaching Assistant who works across all three classes.

Other factors that have been considered include provision and access to online remote learning, child and staff well-being and safety, layout of the school building and use of our outside spaces as zones for each year group.

The impact of Kids club ability to continue to provide wrap around care has also been considered as they work in the same way as school does to minimise the risk of spreading Covid-19 and use our risk assessments to adapt their own ones. They can only function using our year group bubbles and not class bubbles.

We will of course continually monitor and review measures in line with the changing Government guidance. All decisions have been made in the children’s best interest and safety at heart, whilst

not underestimating the impact that isolating whole year group bubbles has for our Ecclesall families. We really appreciate all the positive comments that we have received either verbally or by email and your understanding and patience at this very difficult time.

Kind Regards

Emma Hardy
Head Teacher

Nicole Ramsey
Deputy Head

Guy Willatt
Deputy Head