

Dear parent/carers

CELEBRATING THE FESTIVE PERIOD SAFELY IN SCHOOL

The festive month of December has arrived and the Trust has been working closely with headteachers to consider how we ensure our pupils can have some real festive fun and enjoyment together whilst ensuring everyone is kept safe.

The recent announcement from the Prime Minister that both Birmingham and Dudley local authorities have been assigned to **Tier Three** means that it is critically important that all Trust schools remain highly vigilant and strictly retain all current infection control measures.

To achieve this, I would like to outline our festive plans which will apply to **all Trust schools**. As CEO, I am asking for your support in implementing these arrangements and helping your child to understand that, although not quite as usual, there will still be lots to look forward to in school over the next few weeks.

Formal festive productions	There will be no large-scale festive productions this year as it is not possible to do this whilst maintaining safety measures and the security of class bubbles. Instead, children will be involved in smaller fun events within their own class bubble. Each school is currently making plans and you will be advised of these shortly.
Festive activities	Staff in each class bubble are also planning a range of festive activities and learning opportunities for children of every age to enjoy over the run up to the end of term.
Festive singing	Government guidance is very clear about the potential spread of the virus through communal singing and schools have been advised to be extremely cautious. Therefore, sadly, there will be no communal singing either indoors or outdoors this year.
Exchanging cards	We recognise how children love to give and receive cards at this time of year. Again, this poses a real risk of cross-contamination between children and families. To avoid this risk we are asking that children bring only one card to share with the teacher and whole class. These cards will

	<p>be quarantined for the appropriate length of time and then displayed in the classroom for everyone to enjoy together.</p> <p>To note: children will not be permitted to bring multiple cards into school to distribute to all their friends.</p>
<p>Gifts for other children + staff</p>	<p>At this time of year, children also like to give small gifts to each other or to staff. Any such gifts must be handed to an adult and will be quarantined for the appropriate length of time before being given to the recipient.</p>

It is with a heavy heart that we have agreed these restrictions with all our schools, however, they are both necessary and the right thing to do to minimise further spread of the virus. If you have any particular queries please contact your school and they will be happy to help in any way possible.

As a Trust, we are already looking ahead to better times and are thinking about a late spring/early summer cross Trust celebration as we emerge from the pandemic. I want to reassure you that we will make up for lost opportunities then with plenty of singing, dancing and more sharing! We will, of course, keep you informed of these plans as they develop.

In the meantime, please can I thank you again for the tremendous support you have given your school in progressing through these dreadful times. I remain tremendously proud of all Trust staff and school communities and of course, our children, who have been amazing throughout.

Stay safe, keep well and may I personally wish you a peaceful and happy festive season.

Best wishes,



Robert Bowater
Trust Chief Executive Officer (CEO)