

24th September 2020

Dear parent/carer,

It's been wonderful to see children back at schools and early years settings, learning, playing and seeing their friends again. I know the past few months have been hard on all of us and I'd like to thank you for your continued support.

You will have seen some changes to the way your setting operates so I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of why these are vital to its safe running; please remember that although many aspects of society have opened up again, although in a different way, the virus has not gone away.

While changes will vary from place to place, depending on such things as building layout and number of children, the differences you will notice could include:

- Staggered drop-off and collection at the start and end of the day to minimise the number of people at the building entrance.
- Children will be in 'bubbles' to reduce contact as much as possible, but allow them to play with friends.
- If a child or staff member within a bubble shows symptoms or is infected then the bubble may need to isolate, but the setting will communicate with parents if this happens.
- Asking children to wash their hands even more than usual, use hand sanitisers and follow any one-way systems while staying apart as much as possible.
- Fewer soft furnishings and less sharing of equipment and toys

I know some of these changes may be hard to get used to, and they may be frustrating, but they are entirely in order to keep all children, staff and parents safe.

I would therefore ask for your continued patience and consideration as we all do our best to help each other get through this difficult and unusual time.

Managers and staff have been working so hard to ensure early years settings are a safe environment for learning and playing, so please do what you can to support them and each other and we will get through this.

Please also keep in mind that it is important that we all play our part in not going for a test unless we have one of the three covid symptoms, a temperature, new continuous cough or loss of sense of taste or smell, or if we are asked to by the NHS or public health teams.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak direct to the manager of your child's setting – they are here to help.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Varney', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Dr Justin Varney
Director of Public Health
Birmingham City Council