

October 2020

Halloween 2020 will be different to previous years as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the usual messages around safety and behaviour stay the same but our key messages have changed to ensure everyone keeps to the COVID guidance and helps to keep our communities safe.

This letter aims to help clarify advice for the public on what Halloween 2020 should look like without breaching COVID-19 legislation; we would be happy for you to share this letter with parents in the run up to October half term.

In line with the 'Rule of Six' legislation, people will not be able to hold Halloween parties and trick-or-treating is unadvisable in the current climate.

Our advice for parents is to steer your family away from taking part in the traditional form of trick-or-treating such as door knocking. It is vital that people from different households mix as little as possible in order to stop the spread of coronavirus.

For many children, dressing up and going out with friends and family trick or-treating is a highlight of their year and we understand not being able to do this will be upsetting for them, especially when they've already had such a tough 2020. There are safe ways to dress up, decorate your home and enjoy Halloween.

During half term we will be running a social media campaign to promote a safe, fun and creative Halloween.

Some of the ideas we will be sharing are:

- An alternative approach suggested for parents draws on the NHS 'rainbow challenge' which proved so popular in the spring. People who want to be involved in Halloween can display pumpkins (unlit), or pictures in their windows in the run-up to 31 October. Then parents/guardians can go out with their dressed-up children and try to find them

- Children and parents/guardians will be encouraged to bake spooky treats, get creative and carve pumpkins, or have a trick-or-treat hunt at home
- Hold a Virtual Spooky Halloween Party with your friends

We urge parents of older children to talk to them about why it's advised they don't take part in trick-or-treating this year and to respect people's decision not to take part.