

# COVID-19 Group Update

Dear all,

In the town hall last week, Dennis gave an upbeat overview of our business performance during 2020 which was a fantastic result given the world situation. Whilst the change in power in the political system provided a refreshing change to the news away from the constant messaging about COVID-19, this update remains focused on the subject and implications for Colart.

## **Around the world...**

**China:** Whilst most activities have returned to normal there have been concerns about an increase in numbers in the province around Tianjin. With these spikes the government is looking at ways to minimise movement over Chinese New Year which is coming up in the next few weeks. We continue to follow strict protocols in the factory as well as monitoring the situation with the factory and offices working as normal.

**Northern Europe:** Restrictions continue to apply across Northern Europe with non-essential retail closed including curfew hours in Holland and restrictions on movement in Poland. No restrictions currently apply in Sweden, but they are now being considered. Remote working continues to apply with visits to the office limited.

**North America:** The case numbers continue to be high and more emphasis is likely to be placed on the wearing of face masks in public. We have continued to provide face masks in the DC throughout the period and remote working continues to apply.

**Southern Europe:** Whilst there are some differences in approach between France, Spain and Italy, generally lockdown restrictions remain in place with curfew hours applied and non-essential retail closed. Our factory in Le Mans remains fully operational with strict protocols and remote working continues to apply across all offices.

**UK:** Lockdown restrictions remain in place with non-essential retail closed and limitations on movement. Our operations in Lowestoft and Kidderminster remain open with most of our people in Snazaroo furloughed – due to the impact on face paint sales as a result of the restrictions. Remote working for offices continues to apply.

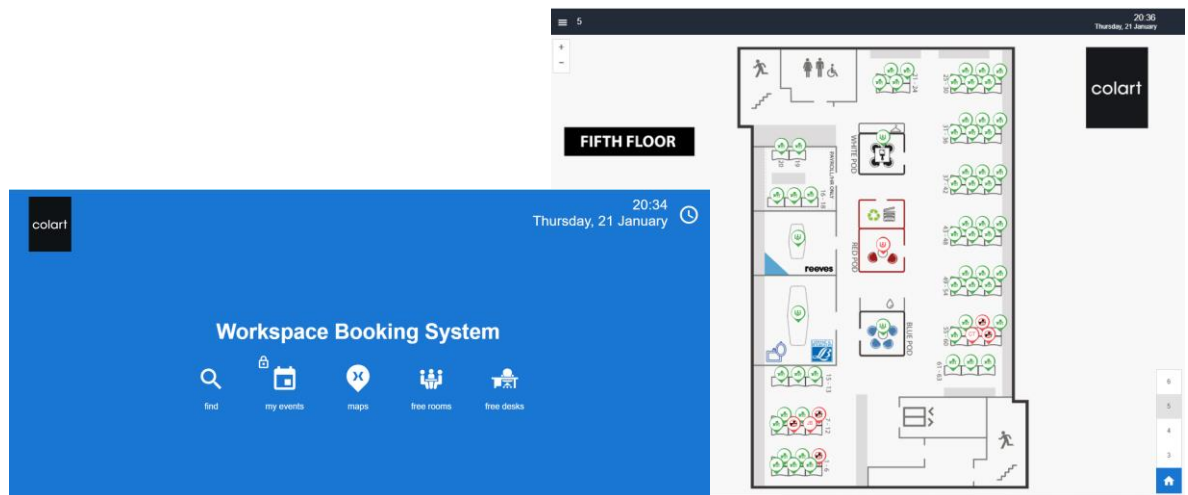
Whilst most governments have given dates for review, there remains no definitive situation and much emphasis is being placed on the impact of vaccination roll outs to help the situation. Thankfully, the number of cases arising in Colart employees and their families remain low with just three people affected recently.

## **Hot desking tool being tested ...**

With the picture in our minds that life **will** get back to some sort of normal with a return to the offices, one of the outputs from the Futurescope Project was to introduce a hot desking tool that could:

1. Support the decision to maintain flexible working
2. Enable a reduction in the office space in London
3. Provide a over-layer of safety to show who has been in and where
4. Be rolled out across the group to other offices as appropriate.

I would like to update you on the progress being made and can confirm that the tool is now in the testing phase. Training videos have also been produced in preparation for the launch which will take place once the movement restrictions have been lifted. The tool can be used on your computer or your phone and here's a glimpse of what it looks like:



### Safety first

Earlier this week Mark Brindle posted on the Wall about a visit from an HSE inspector to Lowestoft site for the purpose of reviewing their safety protocols. In case some of you missed it, I'd like to share Mark's words as they really deserve repeating: -

"... we welcomed a surprise HSE visit focusing on COVID Protocols on site. Thankfully we have a great team, who have been (and continue to be) fantastic at following the on-site procedures aimed to minimise COVID risks to all.

As standard practice here, the inspector was welcomed with a thorough COVID safety check, including symptoms check and issuing of clean face mask. Then onto a site tour where the placement of PPE, screens, sanitisers, clear evidence of social distancing, (5 day rotation of reusable masks), appropriate signage and, of course, our brand new COVID friendly washrooms, led to the visit being cut short with the feedback 'I do not need to see more, it is evident that you have extremely good practices in place....this is the best (COVID) protected facility that I have been to.' A big shout out to all for the continued support through these challenging times."

Great recognition of the protocols and measures that Colart has put in place with People First being a priority and more importantly the discipline that has been respected and sustained by everyone.

### Little Elephant art classes ...

Hopefully you will have all heard about the little Elephant classes arranged for any of our children who are being home schooled during this restrictive time. This week was another great

week with 85 seats taken over the three days and a clear pattern of dedicated regulars emerging!

We have received some great feedback on the Wall such as:

“Big thumbs up from the Kersey household, Lauren loving the 10am slot and our house is slowly filling with amazing new pictures. Thanks for this great initiative” said Jake Kersey

“We’ve been enjoying every minute of Little Elephants Art classes, 4–6-year-olds, last week and this so far we’ve made fans, hands, spiders and jellyfish, finger painting and bunting with crowns tomorrow! Thank you for some calm time to look forward to everyday!” Said Nicola Shaw

Zoom is working well and everything is running smoothly and we are progressing with the concept of product packs, curated for each age range. We are also looking at recording the tutor during the class so that we can share the content and the potential of an online exhibition. Watch this space!

Please keep your feedback coming and sharing the photos of the wonderful artwork created. Also please remember you can forward the link on to friends and family anywhere in the world. We are limited to 100 students per class within our Zoom licence but if we need to expand, we will.

You can share the Zoom link with friends and family.

<https://zoom.us/j/94251161228?pwd=QzhIRzQzeVAyQ09Pay9GTWpieXhoQT09>

From Tuesday to Thursday (all hours are GMT):

- 10 :00 to 10 :45 – 4 to 6 year olds
- 11 :00 to 11 :45 – 7 to 10 year olds
- 14 :00 to 14 :45 – 4 to 6 year olds
- 15 :00 to 15 :45 – 7 to 10 year olds
- 16 :00 to 16 :45 – 11 to 15 year olds

### **Focus on community...**

Finally, during the week Steve Chamberlain put a quote from Martin Luther King Jr on the Wall in recognition of the remembrance holiday in America on Monday for the great man. I thought I would follow Steve’s lead and share another quote:-

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”

Some of you have asked me about how during these restrictive times, we can support our community involvement expectation of one day per person per year. Whilst we appreciate that larger in person community initiatives are difficult, there are still other ways we can support others ....taking time to deliver shopping for housebound neighbours is a very simple example but we are sure you will think of something more creative and impactful.

Talk to you line managers about your ideas and let’s ensure we maintain our commitment to community initiatives despite the restrictions placed on us.

### Keeping to the basics...

We cannot stress these basics enough and here's a reminder:

- Work remotely for those who can, only attending the workplace for the purpose of maintaining connectivity and collaboration for up to one day per week (for at least the short term)
- For those who cannot work remotely, you should continue to come into work as normal whilst aiming to avoid using public transport.
- When in work (whether factory, warehouse, or office) follow the clear safety protocols that are in place to protect everyone's health and welfare.
- Take responsibility for keeping to the safety disciplines in terms of handwashing, wearing face masks and maintaining physical distance... Hands, Face, Space.
- Business travel is still not acceptable unless authorisation has been obtained in advance. If you do need to travel please ensure you wash your hands before and after your journey, maintain social distancing and wear a face covering over your nose and mouth for the duration of your journey.
- Take responsibility for yourself and others.

### Our mantra...

As always, please **STAY SAFE** – please follow the basics outlined above and any advice from the government in your country.

Finally, remember we want every voice to be heard...so please keep talking to us and this includes telling us if you are struggling in any way. You can use all routes available to you:

1. Your line manager
2. Your local HR Business Partner
3. The Q&A platform on the intranet

Regards,



Jane Beeston

*Chief People Officer*