

Dear Parents,

This time next week, the majority of children will be returning to school, to join the one hundred or so children, who are currently attending and once again bringing us all back together. The staff are really excited, but we recognise this will be a significant shock to the system for many children and adults and there will be anxieties and worries which many people share. In this letter, I will try and map out as much of the key information for parents as I can, whilst trying not to overload people. Extra bits of information will be released throughout the week as and when they are needed, as we build up to March 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Times of the Day**

Government Guidance states that the school needs to keep bubbles as separate as possible and therefore there will need to be providing a staggered start and end to the school day. We feel that the following times offer an increased amount of time in school for the children, with an earlier start for the year groups.

**Foundation Stage 8.50 – 2.50 (enter via the main gate)**

**Year One – 8.45 – 2.55 (enter via the main gate)**

**Year Two – 8.45 – 2.55 (enter via the lower gate)**

**Year Three – 8.40- 3.00 (enter via the main gate)**

**Year Four - 8.40 – 3.00 (enter via the lower gate)**

**Year Five – 8.35 – 3.05 (enter via the main gate)**

**Year Six – 8.35 – 3.05 (enter via the lower gate)**

Our aim is that if all children arrive in the five minutes leading up to their start time, then they can be entering the school at their start time. Likewise, at the end of the day, if parents arrive in the five minutes leading up to their end time, the children will leave on their finish time. Teachers have been asked to be sharp and on time, to support this plan.

We appreciate that different times will suit different families, but we cannot please everyone and I would ask that parents don't request changes based on their own individual shift patterns or work commitments, as all schools are being asked to do this and no two schools are the same.

Collection at the end of the day will be in the same way as it was in September until December, with a loop through one gate (the same as in the morning) and out through another.

The short staggered times at the start and end of the day, are to support parents and keep the staggered start as efficient as possible, so please keep moving and work with the school to support these decisions. Basically, if you're standing still and you're not in a socially distanced line, waiting, then you need to move on.

If you have children in a number of year groups, it will be a case of drop and go and then go to the back of the next line for your other children. The variation in staggered start times is much shorter (no more than 15 minutes from start until finish) and we want to maximise

children's time in school. We cannot offer the opportunity for all siblings to arrive and leave at the same time as we did before, as this was hugely disruptive to the learning of children in class.

### **How can parents help?**

Parents can help by arriving in the five minutes leading up to the children's drop off time and dropping and going. Schools are not allowed to have parents 'on site' as is stated in the guidance, due to the risks involved in adults gathering. I would ask that there are no exceptions and people do not make the choice to gather by the school gates. It would also help if people wore masks, when there is the potential for closer contact and observe the social distancing rules as much as possible. This is for every adult to take ownership of. Schools and society are on the path to getting back to normal, but we all have a role to play in making sure that we don't drop the ball now.

I have also spoken to Mrs Cheney at the pre school, as the staggered starts and finishes to the day means that there will be times when pre school children are entering and exiting the site at the same time as school children. Please, however rushed and stressful these times are, can we just show patience and mutual respect so that all children can enter and exit safely. Our school is on a busy road, with a single crossing and side roads which present difficulties for residents and parents, so it is a challenge.

When on the school site itself, during the end of the day loop and collect, please wear a mask. If you need to speak to a teacher, it will need to be a phonecall or email, as teachers cannot have face to face contact with adults. They aren't being awkward, we're just trying to follow the rules.

A small number of our staff are exempt from wearing masks for a number of reasons and they have identification to support this.

### **What will my child's bubble be?**

I have no intention, if it can at all be helped, of sending children home because of staffing issues. Therefore staff will be attached to a year group bubble and will be used to cover all classes within the year group, if there are staff shortages which are not Covid related. This change is possible because of the lateral flow testing now in school, which teachers will take twice a week. Indoors, at least until the end of term, children will be in class bubbles for their lessons, but will share a dining hall to have lunch (still within their own classes, but at the same time, spaced, from the other classes) and in particular for the younger children, when outside, they will share a space as a year group. This is entirely in line with guidance, which allows all schools to choose how they organise their bubble choices. The older children, who are more likely to socialise out of school and more of a concern in terms of infection, will have their break times organised sensibly by their year teams.

Lunchtimes will see the choice between bringing in a packed lunch or having a hot school dinner as before. Free School Meals will be provided to the children who this applies to, universally in the infant school. We now use the online payment platform, for dinners and all money coming into school.

### **School Uniform**

We would expect children to arrive on Monday in their school uniform. Although we understand that there may be a variety of reasons why this may be difficult. If this is the case, please email the school in confidence and we will see how we are able to support you in the short term. Likewise, smart black, footwear is fine.

### **Will as much safety be put in place, as it was before?**

Yes, aside from the adjustment to lunchtime, it will all remain. No larger gatherings. No mixing between year groups, only within. Regular hand washing and as much social distancing as possible. For our youngest children, honestly, it isn't possible, so the focus becomes on the safest way to teach in the younger classes and putting as many safety measures in as we can.

### **What happens if there is a case of Coronavirus in the school?**

As before we will fully take on board the public health advice, but we will be taking decisions on an individual basis, based on the people within a classroom. They would need to self isolate for ten days. If further self isolation was required in terms of the number of children, this would come down entirely to the public health advice and any changing circumstances in terms of the school risk assessment.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

The first three weeks back will involve three stages. Week one will be settling the children back in, checking on well being and trying to make sure they feel confident and safe. The second week we will be assessing the children in terms of their learning to get an accurate picture of where they all are. This will be done in a supportive way and will not be 'testing' in a traditional way, but doing all we can, with the resources we have, to accurately find out where we all are. The third week will involve using this information to plan for each individual and their academic needs, in term 5.

### **Parents Evenings**

The majority of parents will have more information to give than receive after remote/home learning for the past term. We will be arranging parents consultations, via Teams, for the second week onwards in Term 5, once we have a more accurate picture of the children's learning. More information about this will follow in the weeks ahead.

We can't wait to have the children all back next week. We know it has been a very challenging time for many families and we are here to help. If there are individual circumstances which you feel we need to be aware of, ahead of your child returning, please

contact your class teacher to arrange a meeting, or email us confidentially via the school office.

Thank you for your ongoing support and however many bumps in the road this may present, I know we can do this together and make it work in a way which is fair to all the children and all parents.

Mr A Moir  
Headteacher