



Challenge, Equality & Opportunity

Wednesday 3rd March 2021

Full School Reopening on Monday 8th March (2)

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you are all well and I imagine that you are sharing our enthusiasm for getting the children back into school next week. We contacted you last week with some information regarding the return to school and we are now able to share further information about welcoming everyone back to school.

Practicalities and Risk Assessment

Staggered Arrival and Departure Times

We mentioned last week that we were considering various options regarding the staggered times for dropping off and picking up. After looking at the pros and cons of different ways of doing this, we have decided to keep in place the arrangements which we had in the latter part of the Autumn term. We have chosen these arrangements to make things more convenient for you and to make the arrival and drop off as fast as possible for us so that the staff who manage the doors can quickly get back to working with children rather than waiting at the doors for prolonged periods. However, we still need your full cooperation in arriving on time (not early and not late) so that the movement of people is as swift as possible and causes the least amount of disruption to lessons and learning.

The times are as follows:

Classes	Arrival/drop off	Home time/pick up
Blue Class and Class 4	8.40 – 8.45 am	3.05 – 3.10 pm
Red Class and Class 7	8.45 – 8.50 am	3.10 – 3.15 pm
Class 3 and Class 5	8.50 – 8.55 am	3.15 – 3.20 pm
Class 2 and Class 6	8.55 – 9.00 am	3.20 – 3.25 pm

Please think of others as you are moving around site and try to maintain your distance. We understand that you will all want to spend time talking and catching up but we must ask that you do not congregate on site and that you minimise the time you spend on site as well as the number of contacts you have with other people on site. We know how difficult this is and are grateful for your support and cooperation. We are expecting the new gates to be installed next week and this will allow for more space and make it easier to enter and exit more safely.

Please continue to wear face coverings and masks when on site, unless you are exempt. Thank you again.

Testing for Parents and Carers

You might have seen via the media that parents and carers of children who are attending school are now going to be eligible to take part in twice weekly lateral flow testing. We have no further information about this yet although we have been informed that the tests are not provided by or managed by school. We will keep you up to date if we hear anything further.

Visitors in School

We are still unable to invite you into school for any events or to spend time with your children in the setting. We are hopeful that some normality might return to this aspect of school life later in the summer term and will keep you posted. We do feel very sad that our Reception Parents and Carers have not yet been in school since they visited in the autumn of 2019, if you visited at all... we will not waste any time in inviting you into school as soon as we are able to.

Attendance and COVID-19 Symptoms

As we have stated in previous communications, we will be extremely cautious in our assessment of children who are unwell and we ask you to do the same. We know that children who have tested positive for COVID-19 have often presented with mild symptoms which are not listed as COVID-19 symptoms. These have typically been stomach upset, fatigue, headaches or cold symptoms. Because of this, we ask that you contact school if your child has any symptoms of illness and we will discuss this before we make a decision together about whether your child should attend. Thank you for your support.

Please remember that if anyone in your household has symptoms of COVID-19, they should book a test and everyone in the household should begin self-isolation until the test result is known.

If you are in doubt about whether your child should attend school for any reason at all, ring us. The guidance is complicated and ever changing so we are very understanding of the resulting confusion!

Uniform

As we stated in last week's letter, please do not feel under pressure to purchase new uniform for your child. We know that some children will have outgrown uniform and we will take a more relaxed approach than usual. However, please still ensure that your child is comfortable and warm, has a waterproof coat and is wearing shoes suitable for outdoor play. If your uniform items still fit, then please do wear them.

Well-Being

We know that children can't thrive and learn unless they feel happy, valued, safe and free from worry and negativity. We therefore know that our number one priority for their return to school is children's well-being.

You should have received a form on ParentMail about your child's well-being. This is a series of questions for you to answer in order to help us to prepare for the first few weeks back in school and to identify any children who might need some additional support from class teachers and TAs. This is also an opportunity to alert us to any changes or events in your family which might have had impact on your children. Please take some time to complete the form and submit it

before the end of this week. Even if your children have been attending school, it is possible that they have some concerns about Monday when everyone returns, so please respond if there is anything you think we need to know. The form expires at midday on Friday. Thank you.

Each day, every class will have a message of hope and happiness in the form of a short in-class assembly. We will be using books, stories, news and film to deliver the Agents of Hope materials which we have been using since the beginning of this year and this will run alongside the No Outsiders work which is well established in school. Staff have access to a whole range of resources to support emotional and social development as part of the PSHE curriculum and we will be making full use of these as well as many others which we have identified as useful.

We are very reassured from the partial return to school in summer 2020 and the full return in September 2020, that your children will very quickly settle into school life and will benefit from the structure and the activities which they have missed. If we have any concerns about the well-being of any individual children, we will be in contact with parents and carers so that we can work together to make sure that we can give them the support needed to make a positive transition back to school.

Curriculum and Learning

While children have been at home, we know that most of them have accessed the activities on Seesaw and Tapestry and that they have followed the content which they would have followed in school. However, we also recognise that everyone will have had different degrees of success in managing to get through the activities and we acknowledge that there will be some 'gaps' in learning which we will need to address. The good news is that this is what teachers do all of the time and we are all accustomed to differentiating our teaching to support a whole range of needs in one classroom. However, following such a long closure, we know that we are going to have to focus our attention on some key objectives and concepts to make sure that all children can make the best possible progress and meet the age related expectations across the curriculum.

We are therefore all working to adapt the curriculum to make sure that it meets everyone's needs. We know that some skills and knowledge are essential for children to meet expectations and we will spend more time on these than we would have done otherwise. We will be creative in our approach and we will continue to ensure that activities are engaging and challenging as well as revising some of the basic skills which we need to revisit.

Where there are individual children who need additional support, we will provide this from teachers and TAs in the classroom where possible and support will take the form of short intervention activities every day where needed. We have invested in more TA hours so that we can provide this kind of support to accelerate learning where appropriate. We have purchased screens in school so that TAs and teachers can safely work with children on a one to one basis where needed.

As usual, all of our planned provision will remain under review and we will adapt the curriculum and planned intervention as we go and once we have had time to make an assessment of need. Again, we are very hopeful from the full school return in September that children will quickly get back 'on track' in their learning. We will not be using language such as 'catch up' and 'learning loss' amongst staff or with children. Instead we will be looking to see what children can do and will base the curriculum provision on their need, as we always do.

In order to give staff some additional and well needed time to plan together in advance of Monday, we are asking that work is not submitted on Seesaw or Tapestry after midday on Friday. Fortunately, this is well timed with our World Book Day and we hope children can spend the afternoon reading, watching the many stories and books which staff have prepared and accessing some of the WBD activities which we will make available or sign post you to. Thank you for your support.

We are planning a Parents and Carers' evening for the week beginning 28th March so that we can talk to you about your child's well-being and progress. This will be via telephone calls as it was last term. We will contact you with more details soon. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions. We are delighted to be welcoming everyone back into school and sincerely hope that the worst of the disruption is behind us all now.

Take care and stay safe.

Helen McKenna

Headteacher