

Friday 11th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back!

It always surprises me how quickly time passes and returning from the summer holiday is no exception. Having only been back just over a week I am immensely proud of how the children have settled and adapted to the new changes and expectations of how school and learning is now.

I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all of you for adapting to the changes and expectations of what we have had to put in place to manage the site effectively and safely for all at Calton. So many of you have provided us with positive feedback but also advice for consideration; we value this feedback. Like any new system, there may be changes along the way until we get all children in full-time. Please note that our Reception children do not start full-time until Monday 28th September. I do ask for your patience and to also share that there may be some days which appear to be busier than normal due to more children entering the school site. However from my observations and being outside every morning this is not a regular occurrence – Mondays do appear to be the busiest! The queue into school moves very quickly. I only ask that you continue to exercise social distancing along the railings (using the marked yellow tape as a guide) and the white lines when on school site.

I appreciate that the one way system does not suit everyone however with the number of children that we have, with many families having more than one child across the school including playgroup, we felt that providing a slightly earlier start and later drop off would benefit. This would then mean that all children arrive at the same time rather than a staggered start for different year groups. In addition, having a number of entrances for different year groups would compromise the safety of all due to families crossing across the path of others or having more face to face contact due to the nature of our site. We are very much about reducing risk. There is more opportunity for this system not to be followed by families who choose not to use the entrance specified for the year group, plus those of you who have more than one child would need to walk the site many times to enter different gates! Hence the reason for all families to come in one way, drop off their child/children as they move through the school and exit at the top gate. Please can I remind you all that this is no different to how businesses are operating currently. We always try our very best to consider everyone when making these decisions.

Thank you to those who suggested opening the additional gate from the playground onto the car park. The Senior Leaders and Governors have looked into this suggestion. For the safety of our families we are asking that you use the path provided and keep your child/children with you at all times. We also ask that children walk their bike/scooter off the site completely. The safety of our community is paramount.

Thank you to those who have suggested moving the crossing patrol. Mr Hutchinson, is not employed by the school. He is employed by the Local Authority, who we have contacted to raise this question. We are awaiting a response.

If you use the crossing patrol please respect those families who have been queuing and join the line at the end. Likewise, if you are walking up Calton Road from Linden Road, we ask that you cross using the patrol and join the queue. We have had a number of parent comments regarding families 'pushing in'.

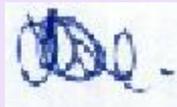
I would like to reassure you that no learning is lost if you collect your child later in the day (after 3:15 previous KS1 day or 3:20 previous KS2 day) they are not sat there waiting. Story time at the end of the day continues after tidying up but in addition there are a number of other learning opportunities that we have put in place so that time is not wasted: Oak Academy, How things are made, 5 minute wonders, Owl Reading to name a few.

Within the school day the children are unable to transition from activity to activity e.g. from class to assembly, class to library lessons, to undertake group inter-rail maths/Read, Write, Inc (RWI) outside the classroom or in different classes etc. All these transition times have gone back into learning time. Assembly, RWI etc. still happen but within classes. Children continue to get an acceptable amount of play and eating time but we have had to shorten this slightly due to limiting the amount of children that are in the hall and playground so that no class or year group come into contact with each other. This time has also gone back into learning.

For your information, guidance states in schools where social distancing is not possible in indoor or outdoor areas, head teachers will have the discretion to decide whether masks are to be worn by staff when communicating with families. Calton site is large enough for socially distanced conversations to be held outside with families.

I will continue to provide you with updates of any developments and thank you for your help and co-operation.

Best wishes



Jane Barker-Doe
Operational Head Teacher