

‘Achieving Excellence through Leadership’

GILES JUNIOR SCHOOL

Telephone: 01438 353374 email: admin@gilesjm.herts.sch.uk Website: www.gilesjm.herts.sch.uk



Headteacher: Miss. L. Whitby

Monday, 13 July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

September Opening 2020 – Thursday 3rd September YEAR 3 ONLY Friday 4th September YEAR 4, 5, 6

I am sure everyone is a mixture of excited and nervous about getting back to some sense of normality in September. I know I am! We have read the guidance very carefully and produced a risk reduction plan which will be on the website imminently. Please can families read this letter very carefully. I am aware there is a lot of information in one go but I wanted to try and be as clear as possible.

We have worked very hard to make sure that the changes do not cause too much stress for families, especially in terms of having siblings and juggling before and after school care. I hope this letter will outline the key changes which you need to know for a September start. As we have become accustomed to over the past few months we will adjust and adapt as we need to. Our first priority is to reduce risk to our pupils, families and staff and are aware we can not promise complete immunity from COVID-19 but serve to reduce the risk.

Year 3 Transition – Thursday 3rd September 2020

We appreciate that the new year 3 children have not had the transition they would have in normal circumstances. For this reason we felt it would benefit year 3 to be the only year group in on Thursday 3rd September. This will allow staff to help families get used to the entrances and allow additional staff on hand to help them with the daily routines as well as allowing children to become used to their new environment.

Dropping off and picking up children from the same family

Having liaised with the infants we have agreed to stagger the start and the end of the school day. This reduces the amount of close contact mixing and allows for social distancing to be applied at these times. When you are arriving please only bring **one adult** to supervise them coming in if needed. If you have an older child who will be walking to school alone please make sure that the necessary permission has been signed. There will be cones marking out where each person should wait for their class. If it possible to **avoid arriving too early** this will help ease congestion greatly. Please see below for the start and finish times for each class.

| Start | | | | | End |
|-------|----------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| 08:45 | 3 Italy | 4 Australia | 5 Turkey | 6 Peru | 14:45 |
| 09:00 | 3 Wales | 4 Costa Rica | 5 Finland | 6 Germany | 15:00 |
| 09:15 | 3 Sweden | 4 Zambia | 5 France | 6 India | 15:15 |



Managing siblings with different drop off and pick up times

If you have siblings within Giles Junior School we tried to make sure as many siblings as possible had the same timings. Where this was not possible we will be allowing all siblings to be dropped off at whichever time is the **EARLIER** slot. If your child is not going straight into class they can be dropped at the hall doors which can be accessed from the playground where we will have a "welcome pod" where they can wait until it is time for them to go to class. There will be separate zones for each year group. We will provide some games and activities to entertain them while they wait. We will complete a similar process at the pick up time and offer you to pick up both siblings at whichever slot is the **LATEST** time. Picking up from the hall entrance where a member of staff will see them out to you. If you have a sibling at the infant school with a later time than your child attending the Junior school please contact our school to discuss arrangements (we think this only affects 3 families).

Lateness

Due to the complex logistics of facilitating a staggered start it is **ESSENTIAL** your child is not late. We need to reduce contact between office staff and pupils so **will not accept pupils any later than 10 minutes after their entry time.** The Infant School are in agreement with this. Should your child have an appointment please follow the normal procedure and make sure that there is advance notice by passing the teacher a note or emailing admin@gilesjm.herts.sch.uk with the details. If your child comes into school alone and is more than ten minutes late the family will be called to collect them.

What does my child need to bring to school?

We would like to minimise what the children bring to school. They will need their PE kit, which will be hung on their peg and sent home each week for washing and brought back the following Monday. A water bottle (water fountains will not be in use) and packed lunch if needed. All other equipment will be provided on the child's desk. During the first few weeks your child will begin bringing home a reading book and reading record which will need to be brought to and from school daily. If it is urgent that your child brings a mobile phone this must be turned off and kept in their bag during the school day. Please avoid bringing in items which are non-essential into school that the child has forgotten.

Attendance

The usual attendance policy is fully functional. Your child should be attending school unless they are ill in which case you need to notify the office by 8:30 in the morning. When calling in to say your child is ill it is important to define what the symptoms are. If they have any of the symptoms (high fever, new and persistent cough and/or loss of taste/smell) we will expect families to contact the NHS to arrange a test and inform the school of the outcome. We will follow up on absence if we have not heard by 10:00. Any parents with concerns about sending their child to school needs to raise this as a concern to see if we can work together to help your child avoid missing any more education than they have already.

Break times and lunch times

Your child will have their lunch in their classroom with their class TA. When they have finished this they will be sent onto the playground. Lunch time will reduced to 45 minutes to allow appropriate staggering. Break times and lunch times will be staggered per year group so they can socialise with friends from their own year group but will not mix beyond this. They will have play equipment which is only used by their year group. School meals are available for those who are entitled to free School Meals or if they wish to pay for a school lunch (£2.70) they can do so. The menu will be adapted to be a picnic style of lunch while the dining room is not in use. The information of the school menu will be available on the school website by the end of term.

Breakfast Club and After School Care (Smiles @ Giles)

This will be available from 7th September. This will give staff time to make the necessary amendments to the space. The space will be organised in such a way that year groups will be kept distanced by having their own areas, including their own games to play with per year group. Both breakfast club and after school club will require pre-payment and booking via the School gateway app so staff do not have to handle cash and we can be sure we have space for all the children. Spaces will be limited and will only be available for children who attend Giles Junior School.

Other changes we have considered:

- Assemblies will be held remotely via a video conference in class
- Parent meetings and gathering will be postponed until it is safe to have larger gatherings
- Swimming will be postponed for the autumn term
- Each class will have allocated toilets – there will be no shared toilets during lunch times
- Desks arranged facing the front

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Offering a broad curriculum

Of course parents will be worried about their child's progress. We know that families have done their best to oversee learning in their home. Rest assured we will be finding out where your child is in terms of their learning, observing and helping them and then working out which elements need to be re-taught. All subject leaders have already made plans to make sure their subject is delivered to maximise progress in light of any missed concepts. PE will still be taught by our new specialist sports coach, Mr Stephenson and his PE support Miss Hipperson. The children will mix in year groups for this. Miss Robinson will continue to teach Music and will apply social distancing when teaching the range of classes across the week.

After School clubs (dance, drama, sports etc)

In light of the children not being able to mix we have decided to postpone running any additional after school clubs for the first half term. This will allow us to review the current situation and be ready to run mixed clubs after half term.

A risk assessment has been produced and is advisable to be read in conjunction with this letter as it has further details which we have considered to mitigate risk and may answer additional questions you have which are not answered in this letter.

I have no doubt there will be questions you may have. Please email any queries to admin@gilesjm.herts.sch.uk this week so we can respond promptly and answer any individual queries.

We look forward to welcoming the children back in September on the agreed date (Thursday 3rd September for year 3 and Friday 4th September for year 3, 4, 5 and 6) and will look forward to seeing them smartly dressed in **full school uniform**.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Whitby
Headteacher

