

‘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

Wednesday, 24 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,



Welcoming all pupils back on March 8th 2021

I am sure many of us will agree we are hugely relieved that all children will be welcomed back in less than two weeks! This is the news the staff at Giles Junior School were hoping for and are busy preparing for currently.

Much of what we had in place will remain the same in terms of dropping children off and picking them up with staggered times. In addition, minimising contact by keeping class bubbles separate. We have reviewed our risk assessment and will re-establish those routines which were previously in place when the children are back with their teachers. We have the added benefit that staff are now taking part in asymptomatic testing twice a week. Our risk assessment is available on our website as well as the guidance document which was used to support it.

The intention of this letter is to outline as much information about how we intend to welcome back pupils and hope we will answer questions which families may have.

Timings

The staggered timings and reduced lunch time will allow us to reduce footfall on the site, as well as keeping pupils in small consistent class bubbles. The one-way system will still be in place and we ask for all families to use this route to avoid crossing paths (even if you are using the wooden gate adjoining to the infant school). Please arrive between 8:40 and 9:00 and avoid arriving too early. Registers will be taken at 9:00 so please arrive before this time. The pick-up will be the same with year 3 and 4 finishing at 2:50 and year 5 and 6 at 3:00. If your child has a sibling in both phases, the younger sibling will wait in their classroom until 3:00 to make for a swift pick up and avoid families having to wait. We will ask all parents to continue to wear face masks, avoid conversations with teachers face to face and to leave the school grounds as quickly as possible avoiding any congregating on school grounds.

Before and After School Club

This will not be running at full capacity but we will continue to allow bookings to be made at a reduced rate. Please see further letter about how to book this facility if it is needed.



Adapting the National Curriculum to support pupils catching up

We learned a lot from the previous partial school closure and feel in a stronger position to support pupils when they return as result of the way distance learning evolved between those times. Subject Leaders are aware of content taught during the autumn term, what has been taught while learning at home and how we will now blend what we have noticed requires further teaching in the next three weeks. This will then be reviewed in preparation for the summer term. The addition of Seesaw has been enormously beneficial for teachers as they have a clear view of what pupils have covered and where further input is required. We have 84% of our pupils engaging daily with learning and hope that this will rise in order to prepare pupils for the return. We have been humbled by the way families have juggled commitments in order to support their children at home. We would really appreciate families filling in this survey to consider the distance learning provision during this time. While we hope that we will not have a need to offer this in the scale of the last month we are aware that there may be times when we will have to provide remote learning in the future so would welcome some thoughts on your experiences. [CLICK HERE](#) to complete the survey.

Children who would like to speak to their teacher before returning

Please speak to your child about returning and do feel free to email your child's teacher. They will be happy to arrange some form of contact to answer any questions and offer any transition support needed over the phone.

Future class closures

We will continue to follow the seven control measures outlined in the risk assessment to reduce the risk of transmission in school. The guidance from the NHS remains the same. Pupils who have any of the three symptoms which we have all memorised at this point: high fever, persistent dry cough and/or loss of taste and smell should book a test and everyone in the household should remain at home until a result is returned. The result should be emailed into the school so we can amend our records and take any action needed.

Pupils or households with someone who has been identified as vulnerable

We are aware that a further 1.2 million people have been added to the shielding list and the NHS have begun notifying individuals. We will continue to respect any decision a family has made to protect their family while we take part in phase 1 of the lockdown easing but do need to be informed as to why this decision has been taken. We hope that families are feeling confident to send their children back to school. Please [fill in this](#) short form if you have any reasons why you **do not** intend to send your child back to school so we can make sure we do everything to support families. We do have some staff who have been advised to shield until March 31st. At this point, we have plans in place to cover those responsibilities in the short term. Remote learning for pupils who are unable to return will be available on the school website. This will be in the format of links to lessons from Oak National Academy which matches the content being taught in school. Due to teachers being on site and having full teaching responsibilities they will only be offering feedback once a week via Seesaw.

PE lessons

Mr Stephenson and Miss Hipperson have been doing their stretching routine and are limbering up to welcome the children back to Physical Education lessons. We will email next week to let you know which days your child will have PE and ask that they come into school dressed in their PE kit on those days.

Return of chromebooks

For families who have been loaned a device for remote learning please bring these back and hand in to your child's class teacher who will log this has been returned on 8th March.

Returning reading books and recorded learning

Over the course of lockdown, pupils have taken delivery of their school exercise books and some will have reading books. Many will also have maths resources and other bits and pieces belonging to the school. All of these need to come back in on Monday 8th March please, so that they can be sorted and be ready to use again. Teachers will also be able to see in real life

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the written learning the children have been uploading in seesaw which would be brilliant to have as reference.

Lateral Flow Tests

Those of you with children of secondary school age will no doubt be aware that they will be tested twice weekly upon their return. Pupils of primary school age will not be tested in the same way and should only be asked to take Covid Test if they develop symptoms. Staff will have the ability to test themselves twice-weekly in order to minimise the risk of asymptomatic spread of the virus.

It goes without saying that we hope that schools will remain open. The intention is that each step of the lockdown will be eased with 5 weeks in between. We hope that our school community can continue to follow the guidance when out of school to make sure there is not a surge of infections.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Louise Whitby
Headteacher

