

13th July 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Arrangements for the Autumn Term

I am writing to explain how we will be implementing the latest government guidelines to keep everybody as safe as possible in school from September. This includes important information about things like timings of the school day.

As you are no doubt aware, the government is very clear that all children will return to school full time from the beginning of term and that attendance is no longer voluntary. We have had very high levels of attendance this half term with all but a handful of children attending school when they have had the chance. If any parents still have any concerns about their child attending, please contact me so we can support you with this.

To support the return of all children to school, the government has published new guidance for schools which outlines the measures that we are advised to put in place to reduce risk of transmission of Covid 19.

You will see below that many of the measures we are taking will stay the same, such as regular hand washing and additional cleaning.

Consistent grouping and social distancing will both remain important principles in reducing risk. However, in a primary school setting such as ours, in line with the guidance, the greater emphasis will be on maintaining consistent groups of children and staff as much as possible. Where people are part of a consistent group (or 'bubble'), they will not need to socially distance as much. However, where staff are not part of the 'bubble' or work across more than one 'bubble', they will socially distance as much as possible. There is more detail about what this will look like below. A new comprehensive risk assessment has been written and is available on the school website under 'policies'.

Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell

It will remain absolutely vital that anyone with symptoms does not come into school. This is anyone who:

- has a temperature higher than 37.8 degrees
- has a new continuous cough
- experiences loss of or change in sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Any child with these symptoms in school will be moved to a designated room and we will ask you to collect them as soon as possible.

Appreciating what we have ... aspiring to greater things.

Any individual with symptoms and everyone else in their household will also need to follow the government [guidance](#). This states that the person with symptoms must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should arrange to have a test. The rest of the household must self-isolate for 14 days unless a negative test confirms that the symptoms are not caused by the coronavirus. Schools have been promised a supply of home testing kits before the beginning of term that we can give to staff and parents or a test can be booked online through the NHS test and trace [website](#). We will ask that you inform us immediately of the result of any test.

The school will inform the local health protection team as soon as we are made aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for Covid-19. The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment and guide the school through actions we need to take.

Good hand and respiratory hygiene

We will continue to ensure that staff and pupils wash their hands regularly and thoroughly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms and before and after eating.

We will also continue to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and support children to use tissues or sneeze or cough into their elbow, and for used tissues to be placed in lidded bins in each classroom. It would be very helpful if you could talk to your child about the importance of this and encourage them to do this over the summer holidays.

More frequent cleaning

Surfaces such as desks and frequently touched areas, such as doors and light switches will be cleaned during the school day in addition to the usual cleaning at the end of the school day. Toilets and wash basins will also be more regularly cleaned.

Consistent groupings ('bubbles')

As much as practical, staff and children will keep within a consistent group. Each class will be their main consistent group, but we will also have larger 'bubbles' of two year groups (phases) together across most of the school. This will make arrangements like staggered timings, sharing resources and staffing schedules much more manageable and will mean that children will be able to play with a larger group of children at break times and have after school clubs.

Our 'bubbles' will be:

- Reception
- Year 1 and 2
- Year 3 and 4

- Year 5 and 6

Sadly, we will still not be able to get together as a whole school in events like assemblies for the time being, but will continue to get together as a school virtually with assemblies on Zoom. Parents will be invited to join our Friday celebration assemblies online.

Measures within the classroom/bubble

Children will not have to socially distance within the class group and bubble. They will be able to return to normal practice within the classroom with most things, such as using the cloakrooms to store their belongings, and sitting together on the carpet for whole class input.

Children will be issued with their own pencil, pen, whiteboard and other items that are used very frequently. Other resources such as books and games will be shared within the bubble but cleaned regularly.

The guidance recommends that children are forward facing as much as possible so children from Year 1 upwards will sit at desks facing the front.

We will also be following the recommendation that groups larger than 15 do not sing or chant.

Children will be able to choose reading books to take home from a class library of books and books will be cleaned and left for at least 72hrs before being returned to the shelf.

Each phase bubble (2 classes) will have its own box of play equipment for use at break times and will have a designated area to play together outside. Children will not have to stay apart from each other but will not be allowed to play contact sports or have direct contact with each other, such as holding hands or hugging. We will also encourage them not to be too close to each other, especially face to face.

Resources, such as PE equipment or science resources, that are used across more than one bubble will be carefully cleaned after use.

Some adults work across more than one 'bubble'. This includes me, the sports coaches from Dellar Sports Coaching, the specialist French teacher who teaches in Year 5 and 6, and TAs who support children in more than once class. These adults will be more careful about socially distancing from children and each other and using their own equipment in the classroom. TAs who support individual children in more than one class will not distance from the named children they work with, but will distance from the other children in the class.

After school clubs

We are hoping to run some after school sports clubs, but these will need to be limited to children's phase bubbles (two classes). We will need enough interest from within these smaller groups to make them viable. A letter from Miss Jolland with details will follow.

Lunches

The school kitchen will be back to operating fully but children will eat in their classrooms and school lunches brought to them. They will be able to either bring a packed lunch from home or have one of the school lunch options:

- School packed lunch OR
- Hot 'grab and go' option
- Jacket potato option (hopefully - this has not yet been confirmed)

The menu is in the process of being finalized and will be shared with you before the beginning of term.

Children will still be unable to fill their water bottles at school so will need to bring enough to last the whole day in a named bottle or bottles.

Communication and school office

Face to face contact between parents and staff will need to continue to be minimized. Please use email, dojo or phone calls for any messages. Similarly, forgotten items will not be able to be brought into school, such as lunch boxes, water bottles or PE kits. We will supply children who have forgotten items with an alternative.

Please avoid going to the school office if at all possible.

Uniform

Children will need to be back in full school uniform. The advice is that clothes no longer need to be washed more frequently than usual and children do not need to wear fresh clothes each day.

Drop off and collection

This will remain similar to how it has been since school re-opened in June with staggered timings and a 10 minute 'window' to reduce congestion. Children will be encouraged to walk into school independently and only one parent will be allowed on site. Children will also have to wait in line to enter the classroom so they can each wash their hands as they arrive. This should be quicker though as they will now be able to use adjacent wash basins! When children line up in their class groups to come in, they will not need to socially distance from each other. However, any accompanying parents will need to social distance from children other than their own and any other adults.

The timings and arrangements for drop off and collection will be as follows.:

	Drop Off	Pick Up	Gate	Notes
YR - Kittens	8.30 – 8.40am	3.05 – 3.15pm	Side gate	Queue by gate and use door nearest the gate.
Y1 - Tigers	8.30 – 8.40 am	3.05 – 3.15 pm	Main gate	Use 'normal' door and wait spaced out in the Year 1 outside area.
Y2 - Panthers	8.30 – 8.40 am	3.05 – 3.15 pm	Main gate	Encourage to walk independently from gate in the morning Queue along path.
Y3 - Lions	8.40 – 8.50 am	3.15 – 3.25 pm	Main gate	Walk independently from gate in the morning Queue along path. Parents to use one way system at pick up, around bench.
Y4 - Leopards	8.40 – 8.50 am	3.15 – 3.25 pm	Main gate	Walk independently from gate in the morning Queue around table tennis table.
Y5 - Jaguars	8.50 – 9.00 am	3.25 – 3.35 pm	Main gate	Walk independently from gate in the morning Queue along fence in playground.
Y6 - Cougars	8.50 – 9.00 am	3.25 – 3.30 pm	Main gate	Walk independently from gate in the morning Majority walk home independently so won't be collected from classroom.

There will be plenty of staff on hand on the first day to show you where to go and what to do. It is really helpful if parents use the whole 10 minute 'window' for drop off and collection, including on the first day of term when everyone tends to be keen and early!

If siblings need to be dropped off and times overlap, parents can go from one class straight to another on the school site unless they have a child in Reception.

For example:

- If parents have a child in Y1 and Y3, they can drop off the Year 1 child just before 8.40am and go straight to Y3 classroom for the 8.40 – 8.50am slot
- If one child is in Reception and one in Y2, they will need to drop off the child in Reception and go back out of the side gate and back in the main gate to Year 2 (or vice-versa)

If times don't overlap, for example, parents have a child in Year 1 and one in Year 5, parents will need to drop off the Year 1 child, go back out of school gate and wait for a short while until allotted time for the Year 5 child to go in.

Curriculum

We will continue to make sure children are taught the full range of subjects. However, we know that children will have gaps in their learning as we were not able to teach everything that would normally have been taught during the period when schools were closed. We are also aware that some children were not able to engage in all the learning and will have additional gaps.

For the first half term or so, we will therefore be using a range of low-stake tests to assess children and identify where any gaps are in English and maths. Teaching will be tailored to address any identified gaps at whole class or group level. This will mean that more of the school day will be assigned to these core subjects for the first few weeks. Other subjects will be condensed into the shorter time available. Through careful teaching and assessment, we aim to have addressed most of these gaps by November. The focus then will be on supporting those children who continue to have gaps or who have slipped behind, using the government catch-up funding.

We are also excited to be introducing a whole-school programme called [PATHs](#) which is supported by Barnardo's in the UK. It consists of a whole school approach and class-based sessions which support the development of children's social and emotional learning skills. We will share more details with you about this in the new school year.

PD Days

Please remember that we have additional staff training days at the beginning of term. Term will start for children on Friday 4th September.

Finally...

As always, please feel free to contact me to ask any questions or for further clarification.

Thank you once again for all your support over the last few months. We have been overwhelmed by the many kind messages and words of thanks from parents. It has been an incredibly difficult and challenging time for everyone, but I do believe it has strengthened our community and brought it closer together.

Have a great, safe break over the summer and we look forward to welcoming you and your children back to school on Friday 4th September.

Best wishes,

Vicky Doherty
Headteacher