

Thursday 16th July, 2020

Dear Parents,

Welcoming all children back to school in September

We are delighted that we can now look forward to seeing all our wonderful pupils back in school next term! As expected, the government has released a long guidance document about how schools are able to do this: the key messages are to maintain rigorous hygiene routines, keep students in their own year group and separated away from other year groups as much as possible.

Our parents of children in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 6 will already know of the new routines in place - we have been extremely pleased with how school has been running since the 1st June. This letter will provide everyone with information about how the wider opening will work following these broad principles:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- enhanced cleaning arrangements
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable
- grouping children together, avoiding contact between groups
- arranging classrooms with forward facing desks
- staff maintaining distance from pupils and other staff as much as possible

We have been following this guidance in our planning and this letter will provide you with our start and finish times to help you begin to plan your child's return. Play and lunchtimes will also operate staggered start and finish times. As I am sure you understand, the school day and learning within classrooms is going to look a little different from what everyone is used to but please rest assured, the safety and well-being of your child is our main priority and certainly in the first week, we will be paying particular attention on rebuilding relationships with each other and familiarising the children on the new ways of learning with social distancing.

Hygiene

We will be ensuring that our children clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms and before and after eating. Please help us by ensuring that your children are highly skilled in washing their hands over the summer holidays!

Water fountains will not be available. Please can you provide your child with a named water bottle which must be taken home every day for cleaning.

Start and finish times

The start and finish times of the day have been staggered and are outlined below. We kindly ask that you adhere to social distancing guidelines and avoid gathering at school entrances and school gates. To avoid waiting on the playground, parents of siblings can drop all their children at the time of their earliest child. Children who arrive by bus will be greeted by a member of staff and taken to their year group.

	Drop-off	Collection
Ruby / Pearl (Foundation Stage)	8.40am	3.10pm
Amber / Quartz (Year 1)	8.30am	3.00pm
Diamond / Malachite (Year 2)	8.30am	3.00pm
Jet / Topaz (Year 3)	8.40am	3.15pm
Peridot / Turquoise (Year 4)	8.40am	3.15pm
Emerald / Moonstone (Year 5)	8.40am	3.15pm
Amethyst / Sapphire (year 6)	8.30am	3.05pm

- Siblings can be dropped off at the same time as the earliest sibling.

How will groups be organised?

All children will be taught in their normal class and the school will be operating year group 'bubbles' which means that the children can mix with their age group peers at break and lunchtimes.

How will social distancing be maintained?

Each class will do the majority of their learning within their allocated classroom or outside. As much as possible, we will tailor learning activities so that they can take place outside. Year groups will not mix with each other which means we will not be holding whole school assemblies. We will be reminding the children about socially distancing however with the best will in the world, we cannot guarantee that this will always happen - especially with our younger children who just want to play with each other. If this happens, we will gently reinforce appropriate social distancing practice.

What will lunchtime look like?

All children will be having a packed lunch at least for the first half term, either provided from home or ordered through Chartwells. Children will eat their lunch in their classrooms and then have a designated time and area outside to play to ensure that year groups do not come into contact with each other. Pupils eligible for free school meals will return to having their lunch at school, and will no longer receive lunch vouchers.

What teaching and learning will take place?

Although there will obviously be some changes to the curriculum to reflect the teaching time that was lost, we are still doing our best to provide a broad, ambitious curriculum. Information about this will be provided in September prior to the school opening - the teachers are just putting the finishing touches to their planning.

What if a child is unwell in school?

We will not be routinely taking temperature checks of any of our children. We do however ask you to make sure your child does not come into school if they are displaying any symptoms. We will take the temperature of children who say they are feeling unwell. If a child is displaying any symptoms, we will ask you to pick up your child straight away and your child must self-isolate for 7 days. You must then arrange for a test to be taken.

If the child's result is negative, the child can return to school as usual. If the test confirms the child has coronavirus, all adults and children in the confirmed case group are to go home and self-isolate for 14 days. The group's household members do not need to self-isolate unless the child they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

Everyone will be informed if there is a confirmed case however, due to the fact that each group will be isolated, we will only close access to school for that group for the 2-week period.

Can I choose not to send my child to school?

It is expected that every child will return to school as usual. The DfE have asked that schools make clear to parents that pupils must be in school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc).

What should my child wear?

All children are expected to wear school uniform as usual. On set PE days, we will allow children to come to school in their games kit. Further information about what day your child has PE will be provided prior to starting in September.

What should my child bring to school?

It is recommended that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials. Therefore, we ask that children bring in one bag which contains their packed lunch (if they are having one from home), a named water bottle, a snack and reading book.

Can I speak to my child's teacher before school or at the end of the day?

Our teachers will be available at the classroom entrance at these times if you need to pass on any short messages. If you need to speak to your child's teacher in more detail, please phone the school office to arrange a telephone appointment and they will get back to you at the earliest opportunity.

Will the school office be open?

The school office will be open but we will not be allowing any parents into the building without prior arrangement. If you need to contact any member of staff, please email or telephone and one of us will get back to you.

Will the school be providing wrap around care?

Our pre-school provides the breakfast club so please contact them if you need this provision. Louise Andall, our School Business manager, will be communicating with you today about our After School Club provision.

We understand that some of you and your children will be anxious about returning in September, after some months out of school. Please be reassured that we are taking exceptional measures to make our schools as safe as can be. We will be providing additional emotional and wellbeing support for any pupils that need it, and will also be providing additional opportunities to support learning where this is required.

Everyone at Tickford Park is determined to welcome the children back in a successful way and will work hard to ensure that the children catch up rapidly on any learning they may have lost so that they will not be disadvantaged in the future by living through a pandemic!

Each year group will be sending home further information prior to your children coming back in September but if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

We're extremely grateful for all the support we've received so far from the school community and I know that by working together, we can ensure that our children enjoy a happy and welcoming return.

Best wishes

Claire

Miss Claire Britnell
Executive Headteacher