



Wednesday 25 August 2021

Return to school for all pupils from September 2021

Dear Families,

I hope that you have managed to enjoy the summer break. This communication details our plans for the return to school for pupils from Monday 6 September 2021 which has been informed by the current guidance and advice from the Department for Education and South Gloucestershire Council.

As the country reached Step 4 of the national road map on 19 July 2021, most restrictions have been lifted including those relating to schools- most notably, there is no longer a requirement for pupils to avoid mixing and be kept in consistent groups (bubbles). Whilst we are all pleased that this will bring about another step towards usual school life for our children, we have made some school-based decisions that we feel are sensible given the local and national infection rate. These have been made in the best interests of our school community as we await to see the impact of the return to school over the coming weeks.

Protective Measures

Schools are still required to have a system of controls within school in order to reduce the risk of transmission and infection. These are:

- **Hygiene practices including regular handwashing and sanitising.** We will continue with the handwashing routines that our children are now familiar with (upon entry to school, before and after break/lunch times and before the end of school). We have also installed a new outside handwashing station to support our pupils with regular hand cleaning
- **Cleaning regimes.** We will continue to work with our cleaning provider to ensure that the school is appropriately cleaned each day. Staff will still have access to wipes and sanitiser to wipe down any frequently touched surfaces or resources
- **Ventilation.** We will continue to keep the school building and classrooms well ventilated by opening all windows and doors. As you may have seen in the press this week, the DfE has stated that schools will be supported to improve ventilation through the provision of carbon dioxide monitors to help identify areas where ventilation may need to be increased. Fortunately, all of our classrooms and the school hall have many windows and so we do not foresee any issues in relation to ventilation
- **Continue to follow Public Health advice on testing and self-isolation.** This remains a key component of the control measures. Please see section on 'what to do if someone displays symptoms of Covid-19'

What to do if someone displays symptoms

It is imperative that we all continue to follow the current advice from the Government and Public Health in relation to symptoms, testing and self-isolation.

If your child, or anyone in your household, develops symptoms of Covid-19, then you are still required to book a PCR test and self-isolate. However, close contacts (including household members) of positive cases no longer need to self-isolate if:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved Covid-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Schools are no longer required to contact trace. Instead, NHS Test and Trace will now contact any confirmed positive cases and work with them to identify any close contacts. This means that even if a child tests positive and has been in school, it is unlikely that any other pupils would be required to self-isolate.

Please support our school community by keeping your child at home if they have any symptoms of Covid-19 or have tested positive. If your child tests positive using a LFD (lateral flow) test, they should self-isolate and take a PCR test. We will continue to contact families should a child develop symptoms whilst in school and ask for them to be picked up. At this point, it is expected that you book them to have a PCR test to ascertain whether or not they have the virus.

Arriving at and leaving the school site

From the feedback from the parental survey that was sent out last term, we have decided to maintain a drop-off window to minimise congestion and support families. **Children can arrive between 8.45 and 8.55am** where they will enter school via the usual entry points (EYFS, Years 1, 2, 4 and 5 classroom doors; Year 3 via grey doors and Year 6 via hall doors). Teachers will be in the classroom so please encourage your child to enter independently. Please refrain from passing on messages to the teachers during the morning as they are needed in class.

The playground will be supervised by members of the Senior Leadership Team from 8.45am. If you have an urgent message, please speak to one of us on the playground and we will pass the message on to your child's teacher. For all other communication, please contact the school office by email or telephone.

The school gates will be locked, promptly, at 8.55am. **Registration takes place at 8.55am.** Any child arriving after this time will need to enter via the school office. If a child arrives after 8.55am but before 9.05am, this will be recorded by the office as a lateness ('L' code). If a child arrives after 9.05am, this will be recorded as an unauthorised lateness ('U' code). Unauthorised lateness can result in a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

We will return to the usual end of school timings: **3.20pm for EYFS and KS1 and 3.30pm for KS2.** Please continue to leave the school site promptly once you have collected your child/ children.

One-way system. We will be continuing with the one-way system around the school site in order to avoid congestion at other points. Families can enter the school site either via the green gate nearest the school

office or the Barton gate. Families can exit the site either via the Barton gate or the green gate near the bike sheds. We will review this at the end of September.

Face coverings are no longer advised in school settings. However, we will continue to support any member of staff, parent or carer who wishes to wear a face covering whilst on the school site. Please respect the feelings of others by maintaining a distance and ensuring that key walkways are clear for people to pass.

Organisation

Although the Government has removed the requirement for schools to place pupils in bubbles, we want to take a balanced and careful approach to support our pupils in September. Our parent survey from last term indicated that many of you also feel that a more gradual return to mixing would be sensible.

Indoors

Classes will be able to mix and work together as a year group. During lunchtimes, we will only permit classes from one key stage to eat in the hall at any one time. Children will be sat in class and year group tables but they may have contact with children from another class within their key stage.

We will not be returning, immediately, to whole school assemblies. Instead we will maintain our virtual Celebration Assembly and trial some key stage assemblies to take place in the hall. We will keep this under review during the autumn term.

Outdoors

As restrictions have been lifted, and as the evidence continues to show that the risk of transmission is greatly reduced when outdoors, there will be no restrictions on mixing outside. This means children will be able to play with their siblings and friends once again.

Toilets

Year groups will still use their dedicated year group toilet block during the school day. However, due to health and safety requirements, during break and lunch times, pupils will use a shared toilet block as we are unable to allow pupils to walk unsupervised around the school.

Lunches

We will be returning to having lunch in the school hall from September. The lunch break will run from 12.00- 1.00pm for pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 and from 12.15- 1.15pm for pupils in Key Stage 2. This slight extension to the lunch break is in order to enable us to clean the hall between key stages during the autumn term.

Please continue to book lunches using ParentPay.

Wrap around care

Breakfast and After School Club will be returning to usual service so please book via ParentPay. Please note that it will no longer be possible to keep children in year group bubbles from September and they will be in

contact with children from across the school at this setting. We will continue to maintain handwashing routines, ventilation in the hall and cleaning of any frequently used resources.

Other points

Children are permitted to bring a small backpack or bag to school in order to help them transport their lunch box, snack, water bottle and reading books. We will return to using the cloakroom areas but these are not huge spaces so please do not send your child in with a large bag.

A reminder that **we promote healthy eating and are a nut-free school so pupils are only permitted to bring one healthy snack for break time** (children in EYFS and KS1 receive a free piece of fruit or vegetables daily). This should only be fruit or vegetables. Children are not permitted to bring in sweets, crisps or chocolate for their morning snack.

Attendance

As was the case following the return to school in March 2021, the Department for Education has made it clear that all pupils are expected to attend school as usual. Please continue to report absence in the usual manner and inform us if your child is self-isolating because they are awaiting a PCR test.

Given the disruption of the last 18 months, it is vital that all children attend school unless they are unwell, awaiting a PCR test or required to self-isolate.

Please do get in contact if you have any concerns about your child's return to school so that we can support you to ensure that your child is not at risk of missing any of their education. We understand that this remains a worrying time for many and we are keen to work with our families to support all pupils to attend school.

Further information and support for parents can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/step-4-update-what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges>

I hope that the information contained within this letter is helpful. I will continue to keep you updated should there be any new advice, either locally or nationally, over the next two weeks.

Enjoy the last few days of the summer break; the team and I look forward to welcoming your child/children back to school on Monday 6 September.

Yours faithfully,



Neil McKellar-Turner
Headteacher