



Dear Parents/Carers

Plans for the new academic year 10.07.20

I am writing to update you on our plans for the start of the new academic year.

As you know, the DFE (Department for Education) issued guidance about schooling in September last week and since then we have been making detailed plans so that we are able to welcome back all pupils in as safe a manner as possible.

Our school risk assessment has been updated to take into account advice around returning to school in September. Class 'bubbles' and other control measures which will be put into place throughout the school so that we can minimise the risks of COVID19 for all pupils, staff and families.

The school term will start a few days later than usual. Pupils will return to school on Monday 7th September. All staff will return on Tuesday 1st September. That week there will be two training days and then the last two days of the week will be in preparation for the children's return.

Whilst we plan to welcome back all pupils in the new year, we will not know what the COVID19 situation will be at that time and so I have built in those extra two days just in case plans need to be changed in any way at the last minute.

I wanted to share with you some of the control measures which will be in place in September (and for as long as they are needed). Much of this is already in place and working well for those pupils who are in school currently.

- Pupils will work, eat and play within class bubbles. This will reduce the amount of contact they will have with others throughout the day and thus reduce risk
- Staff too will work within their class bubbles and the staffroom will not be used to its 'usual' capacity
- Government guidance states that pupils will not need to socially distance, however we will continue to encourage this as much as possible
- Staff will try to practice social distancing when at all possible to minimise risk
- Arrival and home time will be slightly staggered to lessen pupil contact between bubbles
- Playtimes and outside play during lunch will be with only one other class group
- Children will eat their lunch in their classrooms and with their classmates only. The usual dining room congregation will not happen although we will review this regularly.

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- Corridor 'traffic' will remain one way
- Handwashing throughout the day is of primary importance and will continue to be one of the most effective protective measures
- The use of hand sanitiser will remain another frequently used protective measure and everyone entering the building will use it on entry
- Classrooms will be well ventilated
- Outdoor learning will be promoted
- Cleaning regimes have been strengthened and an extra midday clean has been introduced of all touchpoints and toilets throughout school
- Pupils will NOT be expected to wear masks or face coverings in school, nor will staff. As a school for the deaf, we do not feel that this is appropriate anyway because it affects our pupils' ability to communicate effectively.
- Staff will carry emergency PPE kit on their person, but will not routinely wear it.
- Full PPE will be worn for any intimate care needs or if a member of staff has to be very close to a child (for example, if tending to a child who might have fallen over and hurt themselves).

Pupils or staff who fall ill at school:

- If your child wakes up in the morning feeling ill, then please do not send them to school until they are fully recovered. If a child arrives at school and is unwell, or becomes unwell throughout the day, they will be sent home.
- If they are ill, we will check their temperature and give you a call.
- Staff will wear full PPE (apron, gloves, mask and visor) when they are looking after your child and until you arrive. This is on the advice of PHE (Public Health England).
- While we wait for you, they will wait in a separate medical room with staff (who will continue to wear PPE).
- Once you have collected them, we will advise you how to contact the testing services to get your child tested for COVID19.
- If the test results are negative, then your child can return to school once they are fully recovered.
- The school will need to see written confirmation of a negative test result before we allow your child back into school
- If your child tests positive for COVID19, then we will contact PHE and local services for further advice and work closely with you. Also, this would result in class bubbles having to go in to a period of self-isolation so that we can reduce the risk of transmission.
- Public Health teams and the school would be in close liaison and would support families, staff and pupils during this time.

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Transport

Travel Assist are currently in the process of putting together runs for September and they will be in touch with you by mid-August with information about your child's route. Social distancing will NOT have to continue on dedicated school transport from September. Guides and drivers, however, will be wearing PPE.

Home Learning Support

Some children might not be able to attend school in the new academic year for a variety of reasons, so we will continue to support those children remotely, continuing with TEAMS video calls, online learning, and paper based resource packs. Equally, if the situation changes with COVID19 or the city goes in to local lockdown, then the whole school would revert back to our home learning provision for as long as is necessary.

Annual Review Update

On another matter, I just wanted to update you about annual reviews. Throughout the pandemic school has faced some challenges in trying to complete all of the annual reviews. For those parents who are still waiting for their children AR, please be reassured that conversations will take place over the next few days and new dates will be re-arranged in the first two weeks in September.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Alison Carter
Headteacher