

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope that you are all having a lovely, peaceful summer break and finding time to rest and relax together.

As you know, the country has now moved to Step 4 of the roadmap, and this has marked a new phase in the government's response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone's day-to-day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk.

It is now imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult has been offered their vaccination. Therefore, our priority is to deliver face-to-face, high quality education to all pupils whilst still putting in place proportionate control measures and adhering to our risk assessment, which has been updated, in line with the new government guidance, and shared with all staff.

This letter contains some important information regarding how school will be organised and what safety measures we will put in place to keep our school community as safe as possible.

Bubbles

We will no longer be operating in bubbles but will not be mixing as a whole school indoors.

We will, therefore, only have 1 lunchtime (between 12 – 1pm for EYFS and KS 1 and 12.15 – 1.00 p.m. for KS 2) however the children will be able to enjoy playtime with children from other year groups.

Start and finish times

The school gates will open for all children at 8:35am and all children will be expected to arrive on site between 8:35am and 8:45 am. Children will go straight into class on their arrival at school.

Any children arriving after 8.45 am will need to enter school via the main Reception and they will be recorded as late. Last school year, due to Covid and operating staggered starts, we were unable to monitor 'late' children and so the approach was much more informal. However, as we start a new year, we want to establish good routines once again and so there will be a focus on ensuring that children arrive to school on time. This gives children a smooth start to the school day and also ensures that the rest of the class are not disrupted.

We will revert to our usual end of the day time of 3.00 pm and the children will be released from the gate by the shelter. If anyone collecting the children can drive to the end of the layby and we will send groups of children to the waiting cars. Please ensure that you exit your car so that we can be sure we are handing children over to the correct adults.

Uniform

We will be continuing with pupils wearing their PE kits to school on their PE days along with navy/black tracksuit bottoms/shorts/leggings and plain hoodies. We will inform you in the next newsletter of PE and outdoor learning days.

Uniform (please see the website for further details) and school shoes will be worn on the other days of the week.

Self-isolation

Children under the age of 18 years old are no longer required to self-isolate and schools are no

longer required to play a role in identifying close contacts. Instead, families will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. This means that if there is a positive case in any of our classes, other children will not be asked to self-isolate for 10 days, as they had been before the summer holidays. Also, individuals are not required to self-isolate whilst waiting for their test result.

Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors and so we do not require you to wear one.

Control measures

Below are some control measures that we will put in place here at school in line with the government guidance:

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone

We will continue to ensure that our children wash or sanitise their hands frequently and we will continue to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes

We will continue to maintain our regular cleaning schedule, with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.

3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

When school is in operation, we will continue to ensure it is well ventilated whilst still maintaining a comfortable teaching environment.

4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

We will continue to follow Public Health advice. Therefore, if your child develops any one of the COVID-19 symptoms (a high temperature, new continuous cough or new loss or change in sense of taste/smell), they must not attend school and should get a PCR test to confirm whether they have contracted the virus. If a child develops one of these symptoms while in school, we would contact you immediately to arrange collection.

5. Asymptomatic testing

Our staff are advised to undertake twice weekly home tests until the end of September, when this will also be reviewed.

Breakfast club will continue to take place from 7.30 a.m. on a daily basis. We would be very grateful if you would inform us via e-mail the day before if your child is attending breakfast club.

After school clubs will continue to run on a daily basis from 3.00 p.m.

All payments to be made via sQuid please. For families attending Whixall for the first time on Monday, your child will be allocated a sQuid code in the first couple of days of next week.

Please also find attached a new two-week menu which begins on Monday 6th September.

Our new classroom is now installed on our school site and will hopefully be completed by the beginning of October. Nursery and reception children will continue to use the classroom occupied before the summer holidays as well as the outdoor spaces around school.

We are all thoroughly looking forward to returning to a more normal looking school and welcoming everyone back on Monday 6th September.