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**Head teacher – Mrs K Mason**

24<sup>th</sup> August 2020

## **THE WIDER OPENING OF OUR SCHOOL**

**Dear Parent/Carer**

**I write to outline our more detailed school plans for the opening of school to all pupils in the new academic year 2020/2021.**

**I would like to start by informing you that due to the amount of extensive maintenance work taking place on the school site this is the first opportunity I have had to communicate any level of detail to you and I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding.**

If you have passed school recently you will see that there is still lots of building work continuing but I want to re-assure you that school will be **open to all pupils in Years 1,2,3,4,5&6 from Thursday 3rd September 2020** and our EYFS new starters will be joining us for various visits before starting with us full-time on Monday 14th September 2020.

We are now in a position to re-open our school wider **because the government advice permits us to do so. Below is some information for you taken directly from the Government guidance document. Please read carefully so that you understand what the new normal will look like for your child/children.**

*'It is our plan that all pupils, in all year groups, will return to school full-time from the beginning of the autumn term.'*

*The measures set out in this guidance provide a framework for school leaders to put in place proportionate protective measures for children and staff, which also ensure that all pupils receive a high-quality education that enables them to thrive and progress. In welcoming all children back this autumn, schools will be asked to minimise the number of contacts that a pupil has during the school day as part of implementing the system of controls outlined below to reduce the risk of transmission. If schools follow the guidance set out here and maximise control measures, they can be confident they are managing risk effectively. While our aim is to have all pupils back at school in the autumn, every school will also need to plan for the possibility of a local lockdown and how they will ensure continuity of education.*

*Essential measures include:*

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home.*
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene and 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.*
- How contacts are reduced will depend on the school's circumstances and will (as much as possible) include: 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.*

### System of controls:

This is the set of actions schools must take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection' and are outlined in more detail in the sections below.

#### **Prevention:**

Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school ensuring that pupils, staff and other adults do not come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works#people-who-developsymptoms-of-coronavirus>), or have tested positive in at least the last 10 days, and ensuring anyone developing those symptoms during the school day is sent home, are essential actions to reduce the risk in schools and further drive down transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). All schools must follow this process and ensure all staff are aware of it.

#### **Response to any infection:**

1. **If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new and persistent cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.** If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age and needs of the child, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom must be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else. PPE must be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).
2. clean hands thoroughly more often than usual.
3. ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
4. introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach.
5. minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
6. where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Numbers 1 to 4 must be in place in all schools, all the time.'

We are in the process of amending our Risk Assessment using the government guidance and support from our Trust. The school is working very closely with our trust Embark Federation and our family of schools to ensure that our planning is comprehensive. Embark Federation are liaising with the Department for Education closely to ensure that any plans made are in line with Government guidance. Our updated Risk Assessment will be shared with you on the school website as soon as our trustees have approved it, however, it should be noted that due to the ongoing maintenance work, this will not be until September 1st, as rooms will not be accessible to fully assess until then.

#### **Procedures for attendance:**

Attendance is now **compulsory**. The government have made it clear that they expect every child to attend. This means you could be fined if your child does not attend.

#### **School Organisation:**

Following Government guidance, we have split the children into class 'bubbles'. These are outlined below; this allows us to ensure each group has the same pupils and the same classroom and same lunch and outdoor times each day and therefore, different groups are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days, thereby NOT EXTENDING the contact group in an effort to limit the potential spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in school. The 'bubble classes' details are below.

The Government has instructed us to have 'staggered start and finish times' to ensure we don't have large groups of adults and children arriving onsite all at the same time. We are well aware that this poses a problem for families with

siblings and have looked at a variety of arrangements. Unfortunately, because the majority of our families have more than one child all family groups arriving at the same time would certainly not be feasible. I am therefore asking for your patience and understanding as we have planned the safest way possible for everyone, our children, their families and also the staff who still have to remain two metres away from the children and each other wherever possible.

The children need to arrive and leave from our **Kerry Drive Entrance ONLY – due to the rebuilding of the school wall – we are advised that this disruption will only be for a couple of weeks and therefore I will write again to inform you of any changes to our staggered start and finish times once we are able to use the front entrance for our older pupils. NO PARENTS ARE ALLOWED ON THE SCHOOL SITE** therefore the queuing system will take place on the driveway of the Kerry Drive entrance for you and your child - this is to minimise the number of people on the school site in the interest of infection control.

- **Bubble 1 - Year 1 pupils via Orange Gate:9.00am start 3.00pm finish.**
- **Bubble 2 - Year 2 pupils via Yellow Entrance: 8.45am start 2.45pm finish.**
- **Bubble 3 - Year 3 pupils via Orange Gate: 8.45am start 3.00pm finish.**
- **Bubble 4 - Year 4 pupils via Blue Gate:8.45am start 3.00pm finish.**
- **Bubble 5 - Year 5 pupils via Blue Gate: 8.30am start 2.45pm finish.**
- **Bubble 6 - Year 6 pupils via Blue Gate: 9.00am start 3.15pm finish.**

**Please note: Your child is now in a new year group.**

**Children will not be allowed to move around the school site unaccompanied and will therefore need to arrive at school at their allocated time only.**

**Arrival & departure times need to be strictly adhered to, as these are staggered to allow for social distancing. A member of staff will be on duty at arrival time to greet children with a smile. If you have children in more than one class bubble please be patient and leave the site before queuing for a subsequent class bubble. We totally understand that this will be frustrating and time consuming, but we value and appreciate your understanding and support with this, as we try to keep everyone as safe as possible. We will constantly review our timings and procedures to ensure your arrivals and exits are as swift as possible for you and your children.**

#### **Further Information:**

- The drive will be marked out as a one-way system and you will be directed to your child's bubble entrance.
- **We ask that only one parent accompanies each child or group onto the school drive and that parents swiftly leave the site, to avoid waiting of any kind, to help keep everyone safe. Please also make sure any pre-school children are in a pushchair or holding your hand at all times.**
- Parents and children should enter at the main gate (Kerry Drive entrance) and follow the one-way system which is clearly marked in red with white arrows at two metres apart. **Please respect social distancing rules.**
- We will be encouraging the children to maintain a 'Catch it, kill it, bin it' approach to promote good respiratory and hand hygiene by disposing of tissues quickly (as advised by public health) as well as rigorous handwashing throughout the school day.
- The children will have split break and lunchtimes and only have a playtime within their 'bubble'.
- The mid-day supervisors will work with one class bubble at a time and the children will eat lunch within their allocated classroom for classes 1,2 and 3. All other class bubbles will eat in the school hall at a specific time in an allocated area.
- Reception and KS1 children will still be entitled to a universal free school meal. If, however, you think you may qualify for 'free school meals' due to your circumstances it is important that you talk to us and apply - this will enable school to access further funding to support your child's learning in school.
- Children are allowed to bring a packed lunch from home in a lunchbox which will stay on their own table all day. A disposable lunch bag would be recommended, as it can be disposed of after lunch.

- Parents of KS2 children may purchase a school lunch as usual and those children who qualify for a free school lunch will continue to do so.
- Apologies, but at this time we will only be able to provide a school meal with NO Jacket Potato or sandwich option. Please note that on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September we will only be able to provide a sandwich school meal, due to school closure during the summer period.
- We politely request that your child does **not** bring any stationary or unnecessary items to school other than a clearly labelled water bottle (a lunchbox, coat and sunhat, if necessary.) **Named water bottles will need to be brought into school each day. The bottle will be refilled if necessary.**
- **School uniform is now compulsory at this time, including all long hair tied back please. However, on P.E. days during the Autumn Term, we request that your child arrives at school in their P.E. kit and keeps it on all day.** Your child's class teacher will contact you as soon as possible to advise you of P.E. days and any other important information regarding your child's specific class bubble.
- Your child's clothes need to be washed regularly after returning home from school to avoid any potential transfer of infection.
- Children are expected to social distance at all times from all adults in school wherever possible, but not each other.
- Non-washable items and excess furniture have been removed from the classrooms to create space for movement and cleaning purposes.
- Children will not share equipment. They will have their own personal pouch on their desk with equipment supplied by school. **NO pencil cases and/or stationery from home is allowed at this time please.**
- An amended behaviour code will be issued to all children to ensure we maintain social distancing from staff and good hygiene. A copy will be issued to parents by Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. If your child is unable to follow our expectations of behaviour at this time, this has serious consequences for everyone in school. We ask you to support us by talking these through with your child/children. This is to protect everyone's safety.
- Communication with parents remains a priority to the school and as we can no longer do this at the school gate, we are available by phone/email whenever necessary. Remember our staff cannot be within two metres of you, if you have a confidential message please telephone. The teaching staff will be in school from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September if you have a message for any of them. We will try our very best to speak if necessary, but please understand these two days will be extremely busy getting all the classrooms 'school ready' and as safe as possible for your child's return.
- **If your child has returned from one of the countries on the Government quarantine list since Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August your child will not be allowed to attend until after their 14 days of quarantine. Please inform school if your child needs to quarantine and advise of the date your child will be able to attend school.**
- Home learning will be available for any children that need to isolate, which will link to our curriculum.
- **Smalley Childcare** are operating a phased approach to re-opening their childcare facility on site both before and after school. Please see a post on the school website for further details.

**Please note: If your child becomes unwell during the school day with any of the symptoms of COVID-19 you will be contacted and required to collect your child immediately. Until you arrive, your child will be placed in isolation and any member of staff monitoring your child will need to be dressed in full PPE.**

**If you think your child may have been exposed to or has COVID 19 (Coronavirus), please contact the school on 01332 880317 at the earliest opportunity.**

### **Preparing your child for return to school:**

We, as professionals, will try our very best to support your child and give them the usual Smalley welcome, however, we know that returning to school will be a new kind of normal for all of us. We are very aware that after such a long period of time away from school your child may be feeling anxious and apprehensive about all the changes. Please reassure them that we fully understand their concerns and have planned an exciting new curriculum to support them in returning to school. Our recovery and reconnection programme has been written by senior staff and Headteachers across Embark Multi Academy Trust and has been shared country wide to support pupils on their return to school. Your child's safety and wellbeing is always our first priority at Smalley.

**Thank you:**

I would like to thank those of you who took the time to send your messages of thanks to the school team. They have all worked incredibly hard at providing quality education for both the children at home and the children of Keyworkers who came to school in the summer term. I am pleased to inform you that our strict systems and procedures kept all those attending during this time safe and well and I would like to thank those parents who supported us in keeping everyone (both children and adults) safe.

As I have said before, we have missed everyone of you and we look forward to Thursday 3rd September when we can all be together again. I will continue to update you as much as possible as we move forward over the coming weeks, we will constantly monitor and change procedures as and when we feel it is necessary.

In the meantime, take care of your families and stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Mrs K Mason.  
Headteacher