



Dear Parents

1st September 2020

Return to School I hope that this letter finds you and your families well and that you have had an enjoyable summer so far, whatever you were able to do. The national debate regarding schools opening in September continues to be at the forefront of the new but as the start of a new school year is only one week away, I am writing to you to confirm our plans for a safe and successful return for all children.

The most recent guidance states that: 'Returning to school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. The impact can affect both current levels of learning and children's future ability to learn, and therefore we need to ensure all pupils can return to school sooner rather than later. The risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school...In relation to working in schools, whilst it is not possible to ensure a totally risk free environment, the Office of National Statistics' analysis suggests that staff in educational settings tend not to be at any greater risk from the disease than many other occupations. There is no evidence that children transmit the disease any more than adults.' This guidance therefore encourages schools to welcome back all children this autumn. Schools are being asked to 'minimise the number of contacts that a pupil has during the school day as part of implementing the systems outlined below to reduce the risk of transmission'. However, it is acceptable for young children not to socially distance within their group.

System of controls This is the set of actions that schools must take and they are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response'.

Prevention

- 1) 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
- 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

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

Number 5 must be properly considered and schools must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances.

Number 6 applies in specific circumstances.

Response

- 7) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
- 8) manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community
- 9) contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Numbers 7-9 must be followed in every case where they are relevant.

As you will have read, the situation is not any easier to manage and we have had to make changes to our normal school arrangements to ensure that we can adhere to the 'systems of control'. Below is a reminder of key aspects of what, having taken into account the guidance, our return to school will look like:

Timings The start and finish times remain the same as outlined in the strategy document that you received at the end of the summer term.

	Pre-school	Reception and Y1	Y2 and 3	Y4, 5, and 6
Drop off	9.10am	9.00am	8.50am	8.40am
Lunchtime	12 – 12.30pm	12 – 12.30pm	12.30 – 1.00pm	12.30 – 1.00pm (in class)
Collection	3.00pm	3.10pm	3.30pm	3.20pm

Siblings of pre-school children are permitted to leave school at 3pm.

Our new Reception children should attend school for mornings and lunchtimes only for the first week (Tuesday 8th - Friday 11th September). They should be collected from school by parents between 12.30-1pm. They will then be in school full time from Monday 14th September.

During lunchtime, children will sit at allocated tables which are wiped down and cleaned between each sitting

Class Arrangements Maintaining a distance between people whilst inside and reducing the amount of time they are in face to face contact lowers the risk of transmission. Ideally, adults should maintain 2 meters distance from each other and from children. We know that this is not always possible, particularly when working with younger children, but if adults can do this when circumstances allow, that will help. In particular, they should avoid close face to face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone. As such, our usual practice in EYFS is somewhat compromised yet we will endeavour to ensure that children in Pre-school, Reception and Y1 are able to 'free flow' as much as normal, but with an increased awareness of personal space and less close adult physical interaction. For children old enough, they should also be supported to maintain distance and not touch staff and their peers where possible. Therefore children in Y2 - 6 will be seated facing forwards (where possible) with regular hand-washing breaks and increased awareness of personal space and hygiene encouraged. Children should also be encouraged to bring their own resources to school that can then remain in school, to limit possible transfer of infection. Please ensure that children also have named water bottles in school.

Before and After School Provision Children can attend but must socially distance and remain in their class bubbles. Three separate areas/tables will be set up for each bubble to use in the school halls. A member of teaching staff will be on site throughout the provision to support the Before and After School leaders should they need additional assistance. If this is a provision that you require, please let us know at your earliest convenience so that we can arrange staggered drop off and collection times etc.

Measures elsewhere Groups should be kept apart, meaning that large gatherings such as assemblies and collective worship will be avoided. Instead we will have class based assemblies and a weekly zoom assembly altogether.

Further guidance on the return to school can be found by following this link: [What do I need to know?](#)

Although this promises to be a very different start to the new school year I am confident that we will approach it with our usual pragmatism, positivity and vigour. The situation may change however as all the children return to school and local lockdowns may become enforced. If this is the case, I will write to you at the time with additional guidance and information.

Best wishes to you all for the remainder of the holiday.

