



9 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

This has been a long time coming but, at last, I can send you a letter that gives me a great deal of pleasure to write: the end is in sight and I am pleased to inform that from September 3rd your children will be (fingers crossed) back in school full time.

Last Thursday, we received new government guidelines in respect of opening the school to more children. In line with the guidelines, we cannot just get back to 'normal' as restrictions will still need to be in place, but I am confident - with careful planning and us all working together - we will make this work in order to ensure that the children are kept safe whilst resuming their education in school.

The plan that we have put in place for September is not dissimilar in many ways to what we have currently, but we do have to bear in mind we are implementing it with 450 children, not 250! The children will still be in 'bubbles' but these 'bubbles' are now their whole class. The restrictions for the children around this will be that each 'bubble', where possible, will be kept separate from other 'bubbles'. Within each bubble, although it is preferable and the children will be encouraged to do so, social distancing is not paramount. There are no changes to the class teachers or teaching assistants working with each class (as I advised in my transition letter). There are, however, some minor changes to the support staff in some classes. These changes have been made in order to reduce the number of staff working in each 'bubble'.

The following will remain in place in order to keep 'bubbles' separate:

- Staggered start times at the beginning of the day;
- Staggered pick up times at the end of the day;
- Children will all enter school through their classroom doors and not through the reception area;
- Staggered break times and lunch times, as well as 'zones' on the playground which the children will need to play in.

There is an appendix attached to this letter, which details start and end times for each class bubble.

In addition, the other things, which we will still have in place, will include:

- Handwashing on arrival and at regular intervals throughout the day;
- More regular cleaning of surfaces throughout the day;
- Soap and hand sanitizer in every classroom and in other areas throughout school;
- Removing unnecessary items of furniture from classrooms to ensure more space and less surfaces for children to come into contact with;
- Enhanced cleaning after school each day;
- Enhanced cleaning of shared areas and door handles etc during the day;
- Tables spaced as far apart as possible ;
- Children to avoid face to face contact with each other for prolonged periods if possible;
- Children having individual stationery and equipment;
- Staff predominantly will only be working in one year group

- If a child displays symptoms of Coronavirus (high temperature, a new continuous cough or loss of normal smell or taste), they will be isolated in school and will need picking up immediately. We would then expect the child to take a test. If the test is negative and, importantly, the child is completely well, they can return to school. If the test is positive, they need to remain at home for at least 7 days from the positive result or longer until symptoms are fully gone.
- If there is a confirmed case of Coronavirus, all children in that class bubble will need to self-isolate for 14 days. This includes the staff in that bubble too.

Although I acknowledge that the safety and welfare of your children is paramount, another priority for us is the curriculum that your children will access in September.

The DFE have stated that 'school leaders are best placed to understand the needs of their schools and communities, and make informed judgments about how to balance delivering a broad and balanced curriculum'

'The curriculum should remain broad and ambitious: all pupils should continue to be taught a wide range of subjects'

In practice at Lantern Lane, this will mean the following:

- The children will still be taught all subjects (not just English and maths);
- The curriculum taught will be child-centred. This means that wherever your child is now, both emotionally and academically, will be their starting point (we are very aware that children will have had different experiences of learning during lockdown and this will affect both their readiness to learn, and their current attainment level).
- The curriculum taught will be a 'recovery' curriculum to some extent. Your child has missed 5 months of education in school, and therefore we may have 5 months of curriculum teaching to catch up on. For many children, this catch up may be relatively straight forward and rapid (if they have accessed work from home), but for others catch up may be more extensive and prolonged.
- For some children we will provide more individualised or small group teaching in order to enable them to catch up.

Initially, our teaching will include as much outdoor and active learning as possible across all curriculum areas as we are mindful that the transmission of Covid 19 is reduced when outside but also the children's ability to concentrate on their learning for lengthy periods may be reduced.

Our aim is that, by the end of summer 2021, all children will be as ready as possible to work towards the age-related expectations of the national curriculum for the next academic year.

Unfortunately, in September, assemblies will still not take place due to us not being able to have 'mass gatherings' but we are looking at alternative ways of doing these next term. Obviously, this may impact on performances and other whole school events but we will keep these decisions under review during the autumn term.

In respect of uniform, the children will need to be wearing this again in September as we try and get back to some normality! The children will also need to bring in their PE kits again and, as before lockdown, these can now be stored in school. Wherever possible, PE will be outdoor; therefore, please make sure that your child has warm sports clothes to wear outside as well as an indoor PE kit.

Obviously, I have listed all of the adjustments (and even some ways we intend to get back to some 'normality' whilst still keeping your children safe and well) but I believe we all need to work together to make the children's return to school as seamless and safe as possible. Therefore, we hope that you will support us by doing the following:

- Whilst bringing and collecting your children, please follow social distancing rules in and around the school site;
- Bring your children to school at the allocated time in order to reduce contact with other groups of children. It is imperative that your children are on time and are taken to the allocated drop off point for their class. In order to reduce risk to both my staff and your children, we do not want children being brought to the office unnecessarily due to lateness as that will mean more adults going into classrooms, and your child coming into contact with more people;
- Be on time to collect your child so that there are fewer adults on the playground at each collection point and so that the children are not mixing with other children in other class groups;
- Only one person to bring and collect your child in order to reduce the number of people in the playground at any one time;
- For the older children, if your child cannot follow social distancing rules whilst on their walk home, then we expect them to be brought to and collected from school by an adult who can ensure this happens;
- Send your child with a water bottle (cups cannot be provided) and their lunch box if they are having sandwiches;
- Send your child every day with their book bags and partnership books;
- Please keep face-to-face communication with staff to a minimum. Parents are asked to not take their child directly to the classroom door but to stand back and allow their child to enter school in a safe, orderly fashion. This is vital to us maintaining the health of the staff. Partnership books should be used for all day-to-day communication.

In addition to the above safety requests, I would ask that, at the very least, you as parents continue to hear your child read every day - your child's reading ability will be key to their success in all areas of the curriculum and will impact on their ability to catch up on lost learning time. This will be appropriate even for the older children in school although they should also be encouraged to read independently too.

As I am sure you will now recognise, school will remain somewhat different for your children even in September, but hopefully from reading the information provided, you will see that we are doing our very best to keep your children well by following the government guidelines carefully. With that in mind, I want to take this opportunity to remind you that from September, attendance at school is mandatory and therefore it is your duty as parents to make sure your children attend. I fully respect that there will remain some anxieties for many of you in respect of your child's return to school and I am more than happy to discuss these with you, if needed.

We will obviously keep all arrangements under review as we move through the autumn term and when appropriate restrictions may be lifted. Equally, can I remind everyone that these are still only plans and are subject to change if required. If anything were to change, I would communicate immediately with you.

I am sorry that this letter is so long but hopefully it will reassure all of you that we are doing our very best to make this full opening of school as safe as possible. I believe that although lockdown has

been very challenging for all of us, working together will enable us to take the first step (and in many cases - second step) back to the school life that we are all craving.

Best wishes

Jane Butler