

Dear Abbey Gates Family,

## SEPTEMBER 2020

We are overjoyed to let you know you that from September 4<sup>th</sup> your children will be (fingers crossed) back in school full time.

**(F1 is mornings only just for the week beg 7<sup>th</sup> September - please bring your children at 9.20am and collect them at 11.45)**

In line with the government 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 and happy whilst resuming their education in school.

The plan that we have put in place for September is not dissimilar in many ways to that we have currently. The children will still be in 'bubbles' but these 'bubbles' are now their whole Key Stage/pair of classes. 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.

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 dedicated doors and handwash "stations" have been identified
- Staggered break times and lunch times

**There is an appendix along with this letter, which details start and end times for each class bubble.**

In addition, other measures will include:

- Handwashing on arrival and at regular intervals throughout the day
- More regular cleaning of surfaces throughout the day
- Soap/ 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 with one year group/bubble
- Longdale Kids' Club will operate from the school hall as this larger space enables bubbles to be maintained as far as possible- we are in the process of finalising these arrangements

## WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD DISPLAYS SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS:

- 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 collecting immediately. We would then expect your child to take a test and ask you to report the results to school asap. If the test is negative and, importantly, the child is completely well, they can return to school. If the test is positive, they must 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 the bubble will need to self-isolate for 14 days. This includes the staff in that bubble too.

## LEARNING

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 Abbey Gates, this will mean the following:

- The children will of course be taught all subjects (not just English and maths as speculated by some media outlets)
- The curriculum taught will, as ever, 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 we have all had different experiences during lockdown and this will affect both children's "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/will have areas of curriculum teaching to "catch up" on. For many children, this may be relatively straight forward and rapid 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 support their learning
- All children (and adults) are individual and an overarching focus will be on well-being
- We will send out further information regarding reading books early in the Autumn term.

Initially, our provision 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.

In respect of uniform, the children will need to be wearing this again in September as we try and get back to some normality!

When your child is timetabled to take part in PE we will ask that your children come to school for that day in their PE clothing and trainers. Wherever possible, PE will be outdoors; therefore, please make sure that your child has warm sports clothes to wear outside as well as an indoor PE kit.

We 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 around the school gates and in the vicinity of the school
- 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**
- If you have more than one child - we ask that you follow the times/entrance for each child's class
- Be on time to collect your child so that there are fewer adults 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 please in order to reduce the number of people at the drop off and collection points 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
- At this time, we are still not able to welcome parents on to the school site but hope this will change in good time

As I am sure you will now recognise, school will be a little 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 everyone safe and well by following the government guidelines carefully.

We will obviously keep all arrangements under review as we move through the Autumn term and when appropriate restrictions may be lifted/adapted. 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 you that we are doing our very best to make this full opening of school as safe and happy as possible. I believe that although lockdown has been very challenging for all of us, working together will enable us to start to get back to the school life that we are all craving.

TAKE CARE, BE KIND

KATE CUMBERPATCH AND THE ABBEY GATES TEAM