



# Letters to Parents

## 26.2.21



Friday, 26 February 2021

**Re: Return to School March 8th**

Dear Parents,

I hope you are well and managed to get a break over half term. I understand how challenging the last two months have been for everyone and I would like to thank you for all of your hard work in supporting your children and for your understanding. I am delighted to confirm that all DVS pupils will be returning to school the week beginning March 8<sup>th</sup>. This is fabulous news and we can't wait to have everyone back in school. Please continue to engage with the remote learning and live lessons until then as this will put the pupils in the strongest possible position for when school returns and will help avoid gaps in learning. Please email the office if your child is unable to attend a lesson.

I am writing to confirm arrangements for the return to school for all pupils on March 8<sup>th</sup> following the announcement on February 22<sup>nd</sup> by the Government and Department for Education.

We are very excited to be welcoming the children back in school and whilst I am sure that you are all delighted that they will be returning, there will inevitably be some concerns. We have to take certain actions to ensure that pupils and staff continue to stay safe and these will be outlined below. I have attached an updated version of our risk assessment as well as our detailed plan and I hope that this will allay and concerns that you may have. **The Department for Education has confirmed that attendance is now mandatory for all pupils.**



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This letter will detail arrangements for the reopening of the school so I would ask you to read it carefully. We will be asking that you confirm that you have read, understood and agreed to the guidance and regulation set out in the letter by filling in a google form prior to your child/ren returning to school.

Each school must put in place a system of controls and protective measures in order to operate and there are set parameters within which DVS will operate from March 8<sup>th</sup> 2021.

- Ensure the safety of our school community including staff and children.
- Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.
- Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring that they don't attend school.
- Face coverings for adults in recommended circumstances
- Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual.
- Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products.
- Minimise social contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

There is also a set of additional measures that the school must consider:

- Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Engage in asymptomatic testing for staff.
- Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
- Manage confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst the school community
- Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

Most importantly, I draw your attention to the increased risk of needing to close a bubble or indeed the whole school and move to remote learning:



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1. Whilst cases nationwide are falling, the new variant of COVID-19 is more virulent and there is a chance of a pupil or staff member testing positive in the coming weeks once schools open. All close contacts in school (usually the bubble, however this is determined in conjunction with PHE) will need to self-isolate and remote learning will take place.
2. We are operating as three separate bubbles; Reception, Year 1/2 and Year 4/5. Staff from one bubble will not be able to cover staff absence in another. If a staff member is absent for any reason or if anyone tests positive the bubble may need to close and again, remote learning will take place. Our remote learning policy is on our website for your further information.

With all of this in mind, it is pertinent that I remind you how vital it is, especially at this time, to adhere to all the national and school rules to ensure the safety of all pupils, staff and parents. We can only control what goes on inside our school walls so we rely on you to ensure COVID security outside school hours.

Please could I also ask you to help us by doing the following: -

- Please could you try to take your child's temperature before they come to school and do not send to school if 37.8 or over. We will also take your child's temperature at school.
- Be vigilant with your child's health. If they are unwell at all, please consider whether they are well enough to attend school. If in doubt, please contact the school or keep them off for a day to ensure no worrying symptoms appear. One day off in this way can prevent a whole period isolating for lots of people if they do turn into COVID symptoms and a positive test.
- If your child or anyone in your child's family or indeed a close contact decides to take a COVID test due to worries about possible symptoms, please keep your child at home until the test result comes through. Again a day or so home learning here could prevent a whole bubble closing down if the test were to be positive.
- With regard to lift sharing for school runs please only do so if really necessary or if part of a bubble or child care arrangement that the school are already aware of.
- Please wear a face mask when dropping off or picking up children.



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As you know, we have always worked hard to maintain a sense of 'normality' for the children. We will continue to follow the guidance over the next few weeks and months and I will keep you updated on any changes. Guidance may change at short notice and as soon as we are informed of any changes by government, DfE or Buckinghamshire Council we will advise you accordingly.

We are grateful, as always, for your continued understanding of the difficulties we face in running a small school in these circumstances and we appreciate your kindness and ongoing support in these challenging times.

### **Summary of arrangements from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

#### **School Organisation**

The school will continue to operate in three consistent 'bubbles' – Acorns, Birch and Willow, where contact between 'bubbles' will be kept to a minimum. By splitting the school into three bubbles, we limit sharing of rooms, social spaces and interactions between groups but at the same time ensure that children maintain their social interactions within a wider 'bubble', which is beneficial for their social development, well-being and mental health. Our staff (as much as practical and possible) will operate exclusively within each 'bubble.'

#### **Operating Times/School Day**

We will continue with the staggered start/end to the school day, however, we have made some minor changes to these. The start times will remain the same at this stage but are subject to change as we move forward. As previously, siblings in different year groups may be dropped off at the earliest start and collected at the latest finish.

	<b>Start</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Finish</b>
<b>Acorns</b>	8.45am	11.45	2.45pm
<b>Birch</b>	8.50am	12.15	2.50pm
<b>Willow</b>	8.55am	12.15	3pm



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### Drop off/Pick up

- Parents and children should line up outside the main brick wall ensuring 2m distancing along per previous arrangements and **should not congregate around the gates or on the road.**
- Please could I ask **parents to wear masks** when lining up to drop off or pick up your child to help prevent the spread of Covid 19.
- That you arrive and leave promptly when dropping off/ collecting your child – please do not congregate as we know that the virus is easily transmitted from person to person.
- Parents should park away from the front of the school gates and walk to prevent close contact with those lining up.
- Children will be called into the playground and asked to line up.
- Children will be instructed to wash their hands on arrival and frequently throughout the day.
- Children should be collected promptly at the allocated time. Please adhere to the social distancing rules outside the playground to enable us to send your children to you promptly.
- Please advise the office if someone else is picking up your child as we cannot dismiss children to someone else unless we have your permission. Please note you should not be collecting children from a separate bubble to your own child (other than siblings).

Hopefully, these extra measures will help reduce the virus spreading in our school community and prevent year group bubbles being sent home.

### Attendance and Uniform

- If your child is unable to attend please call the school office by 8:30am giving clear reasons for their absence.
- If your child is presenting with possible Covid-19 symptoms we would ask you to get them tested and inform the school as soon as possible of the outcome of the test.
- Children should be punctual and in full uniform or PE kit on allocated days.
- **Please ensure that your child has a NAMED, warm, waterproof coat at school at all times. The children will be spending lots of time outside. We are also required to ventilate classrooms at all times, so please add under layers such as a vest or light thermal top to your child's attire each day to ensure they do not get cold.**



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- **Please can Reception parents provide a pair of wellies for their child.**
- As advised by the government, attendance is now mandatory and any term time holidays will not be authorised; in light of the time the children have already missed.

### **Equipment including PE, Uniform and Medication**

As communicated previously, please ensure that your child brings their stationery to put into the pencil cases provided by the school on the first day of term. If your child is using their own pencil case can they please be small enough to fit inside their trays/boxes. Any sharing of equipment is strongly discouraged, hence the importance of the above.

- ALL children returning to school will need to bring:
  - Their own stationery which should only be used by them: colouring pencils, rubber, sharpener and glue stick. **We will provide a named pencil case and a pencil for all children.**
  - Bring their own named water bottle.
  - Bring a packed lunch in a named lunch box if your child is not having a school lunch.
  - Named PE kits.
  - Full School Uniform including a coat as they will be going outside in all weathers.
  - Please ensure all clothing is **clearly named**. We will not be able to lend children clothing from our supplies so please ensure your child has everything they need in school.
  - All medication must be named and forms completed and returned to school.

### **Curriculum**

The school will continue to offer a broad and balanced curriculum with some minor adjustments to allow for any 'catch up' work. It is difficult, at this stage, to ascertain exactly what we will have to adjust; however, each class teacher will conduct base line tests for their pupils as soon as practically possible. This will allow each class teacher to adjust the curriculum in order to rectify any gaps in children's learning. Please be assured that the school will do the utmost to ensure that no child is disadvantaged in any shape or form.



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## Remote Learning

We fully appreciate that you may have a number of questions regarding potential scenarios that could arise over the coming weeks and months. To mitigate any anxiety relating to this, we have clearly set out what the school approach would be to the following scenarios so that you have clarity on what our course of action would be if we had to close a bubble for any reason.

- **What would happen if my child or a pupil in their class has a confirmed case of Covid?**

In this scenario we would revert to Remote learning following the same practice as the most recent lockdown (January 21 onwards). We would be offering a combination of live and recorded lessons using MS Teams/Tapestry and all pupils would be expected to complete the learning from home.

- **What would happen if the class Teacher has a confirmed case of Covid?**

If a class teacher contracts Covid, again we would have to close the bubble and revert to Remote Learning. However, due to the illness the teacher would be unable to upload live/pre-recorded lessons. Instead the children would follow planned instructions (similar to Lockdown 1) and wherever possible these would link to additional resources like National Oak Academy videos. In this scenario, the children are still expected to complete all the work and upload accordingly. If this situation was to arise, we would endeavour to get another member of staff to hold live registration sessions to offer support and answer any questions, if possible.

- **What learning is my child expected to engage with if they are isolating?**

If your child has to isolate but is not showing any symptoms and therefore is able to access remote learning then you would be expected to notify the school straight away. Your child would then be provided with planned instructions for the next 10 days. The work provided will be in line with age related expectations that we hold in school.



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### **Morning Club**

- We will be offering Morning Club with drop off facilities starting from 8:00 am.

### **Lunches**

- Children will continue to eat in their bubbles in their individual classrooms and the tables will be sanitised.

### **Forest School**

- Acorn class will commence Forest School on a Tuesday afternoon starting w/c 8<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Reading Books**

- We will issue reading books, for daily reading at home, on a Monday. Please ensure that your child brings their book bag to school on a Monday.

### **Extra-curricular Clubs**

- We will work with our providers during the course of the next week and will let you know what after school provision we are able to offer.

### **Hygiene**

- Children will use designated toilets and basins only. These will be cleaned after lunch and again at the end of the day.
- Children will continue to wash or sanitise hands throughout the day.
- Staff will wash and sanitise hands regularly.
- Resources and equipment will not be shared between bubbles and will be frequently sanitised.



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- Staff will have the option to wear visors when teaching in class and masks when doing close work with the children.

### Testing

There is no requirement for primary pupils to be tested using lateral flow devices. All staff have been offered the option to test twice weekly since the end of January.

### Parental Contact with School

As stated before, we have to minimise contact between staff and parents as much as possible and as such are unable to welcome parents into the school. Therefore, if you need to see or speak to your child's class teacher or myself, please make an appointment via the school office or communicate via the class email. We will endeavour to arrange a meeting via Teams or Zoom with you. We will be limiting the number of people entering the school so please try your very best to ensure that your child has everything that they need with them at the start of the day (lunch boxes, PE kits, equipment etc.).

### School Events

We have always prided ourselves on being able to offer a wide range of extra-curricular experiences and it saddens me tremendously that our offer to your children will be reduced for the time being. Primary school experience encompasses many things and I can only hope that 'the order' will be restored as soon as possible. At this stage, we are unable to run many school trips linked to the curriculum or hold any events at school. If government advice changes then will of course keep you informed.

We will of course have lots of activities, days and events in school for the children and more details regarding these, assessment week and parents evening will be sent to you by the end of next week.



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Please confirm you have read, understood and agree to the guidance and regulations set out in this letter by filling in the form below:

Name of Child \*

Class \*

I confirm I have read, understood and agree to the new Covid-19 school guidelines as per the letter from Miss Nawaz sent on Friday 26th February 2021 \*

Yes

No

Yours sincerely,

Miss Nawaz

Headteacher



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