

3rd September 2020

Dear Parents

We are delighted to be welcoming our families back to school next Monday 7th September 2020. After the closure of schools to most pupils in March and the return of some year groups in June we have had ample opportunity to ensure safety procedures are in place and are very much looking forward to seeing all of our children back in school learning and growing together.

As the Government eases restrictions, it is our shared priority to ensure that our school is safe for children and teaching and support staff. We appreciate that some children may be anxious and will need additional support during the transition back to school. As a staff team we have been preparing to support all of our children as they return to school. This will include taking time to reassure children about the safety measures in school, supporting them to understand how to keep themselves safe, practical strategies to promote well being and good mental health and taking time to reflect on the highs and lows of life during the pandemic. Below are some ideas on how to support your child as they return to school.

https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/back_to_school_booklet.pdf

<https://nipinthebud.org/information-films/tips-for-returning-to-school/>

<https://www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk/uploads/Files/PDFs/Resilience%20Activities/Letting%20Go%20and%20Future%20plans.pdf>

I have also put some 'Frequently Asked Question' answers below. These may help to reassure you about what the school will be like for the children and bust a few myths that are flying around! Also attached to this email is a copy of the letter sent to parents at the end of the Summer term with information on the staggered starts and ending to the school day.

I look forward to seeing you all on Monday.

Best Wishes

Miss Coombe

***Attached reminder letter from July**



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Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Do parents and pupils have to wear face masks?

A: Face masks/shields are not to be worn by pupils inside school. Parents are requested and advised to wear face masks when visiting. "Face coverings" must be removed by children when entering the building and either taken away by the parent or placed in a sealable (ziplock type) bag. These will not be disposed of on site. This bag will be placed within the child's school bag and then their hands sanitized (or washed). The face covering must not be removed from the bag until the end of the school day.

Q: As a parent, can I come into school to visit or have a meeting with a member of staff?

A: Entry into the school buildings must be limited and by appointment or approval by school staff in advance. We will stay as welcoming as possible. Email will be a safe way to contact us. We will be keeping the class email addresses open for this purpose. You can also ring the office to pass on a message. Teachers will contact you as soon as they reasonably can but please remember that they will be teaching during the school day.

Q: I have heard that the school will COVID test my child even without my permission as a parent. What if I am not happy about this?

A: There is much rumour nationally. It is most sensible to check with Government guidelines and school's procedures. Schools will have tests delivered by the Government. We believe that this will be up to 10 tests. Our understanding and intention is to offer these to parents if a child is showing symptoms and there are exceptional circumstances that they cannot take the child to a testing centre. Our procedure to isolate suspected cases still stands. It will be down to the parent to take the child for testing.

Q: Will I need to socially distance on the school site?

A: It is important that you maintain social distance when dropping off and collecting children and leave promptly to ensure other parents can safely enter the school site. We kindly ask that only one adult drops off and collects their child. It is very important that you keep promptly to your time slot and allocated entrance/exit to help us to ensure our bubbles remain safe, and limit the risk of cross-contamination. This will help us to control the risk for our whole community.

Preparing Your Child For the First Day Back in School

As schools begin to open to more children, parents and children may well be feeling anxious. Here's some ideas of how best to prepare.

Be Calm.

Your child will take their lead from you and be reassured if you are steady and matter of fact.



Be Curious.

These are strange times and their imagination may run away with them. Listen, and try not to dismiss or minimise their fears but validate how they are feeling – “it’s completely fine to feel like that at the moment” or “I can really understand why you would feel like that”



Be Positive.

Remind them of all the ways they have learnt to keep themselves safe: washing their hands regularly, sneezing and coughing into their elbow, not hugging others and staying in their own space.



Be Thankful.

Help your child think of things they are looking forward to: being with their friends, seeing their teacher, favourite activities but be mindful some of these may not be available for them



Be Supportive

Younger children particularly may struggle with separation anxiety and may become tearful, clingy or act out. Reassure them that you will miss them too and think of them through out the day. It might be helpful to draw a little heart on their wrist and one on yours too. You can call it the hug button and when they find they are missing you they can press the heart and know that you will be doing the same at home. Sometimes having a little object to remind them of you through the day helps but please check this out with your school first.



Be Prepared.

Support your child to be aware of changes that may have happened to their classroom environment since they were there last and rehearse any new routines that school may have shared. Rehearse and practice your ‘goodbye’ routine and create a ‘hello’ greeting for the end of the day for them to look forward to.

