



## Information for parents and carers for Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

We are looking forward to welcoming all pupils back to Thringstone and we very much hope that this will be the last time school will have to close because of the pandemic, however we still need to remember that the current national restrictions remain in place.

The school will be fully open to all children from **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March**.

We know that there will be children who are a little anxious about the return to school. Please reassure your child; our staff are very aware of this and plans and activities will take into account the children's needs. We know that they need time to talk and reflect. We have a skilled pastoral team who can provide additional support for the children. Please contact your child's teacher if there are issues and concerns regarding your child's return to school.

Our procedures and control measures are in place to work at ensuring any risk of spreading the infection among the school community is reduced. The following information is based on the latest government guidance.

In opening the school to all pupils we need to ensure that we minimise any COVID-19 risks and have a system of protective measures in place - as outlined in the guidance and detailed in our risk assessment.

### **Symptoms**

If your child or someone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms, **do not send your child into school**. Please contact the school as soon as possible to let them know.

If you or your child are feeling unwell, the government recommends that a COVID test is taken even if you don't think it is COVID related – as we know people can experience different symptoms. Please update the school with the results of the test.

If your child becomes unwell in school, you will be contacted and asked to take them home. If they have developed a persistent cough or high temperature or have a change in their sense of taste or smell they will be moved to a room where they can be isolated with adult supervision while awaiting collection.

The government are now making lateral testing available to all parents and carers of school age children. The tests are not for primary aged pupils and there is no expectation that pupils have to have a test before coming back to school.

### **Attendance**

The government has made it clear that school attendance is mandatory again and the usual rules on attendance will apply. Please contact the school if your child is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice. School will offer access to remote education in these cases; the government expects parents and carers to support the access to remote learning.

## **Classroom organisation**

We are continuing to operate as before in 'Bubbles' and children will be arranged in our separate year groups; as before the guidance is clear that these bubbles should not be allowed to merge or interact with other bubbles at school and measures should be taken to ensure they are kept apart.

Tables and seating will be arranged forward facing for children in Years 1-6.

For children in Foundation Stage there is no specific guidance so these environments will be set up as usual.

**Children do not need to social distance from each other** – children are able to sit next to each other and we do not need to plan a 2m distance between them; however, there is an expectation that adults in school continue to maintain a distance and any close interaction is kept to a minimum. Please explain to your child that staff will be maintaining a distance and they should not try and hug their teacher or other members of staff.

## **Start and Finish Times**

We are going to operate a **30 minute** window at the beginning and end of the school day for children to arrive and leave school. In the morning the classroom doors will be open between 8.45am and 9.15am. We ask that parents, carers and children coming to school on their own, help the school maintain the measures put in place by not arriving at school before the earliest opening time and having to stand around in the playground.

**Children should go straight into their class bases on arrival on the school grounds.**

At the end of the day, children can be collected anytime between 2.45pm and 3.15pm. Once again please do not arrive on the school site before the earliest pick up time. Once you have collected your child(ren), please leave the school premises as soon as possible.

**We ask that parents and carers wear face coverings and maintain social distancing whilst on school premises.**

## **Uniform**

Children will be expected to wear school colours/ uniform but I understand this may not be possible due to non-essential shops being closed. Plain, dark coloured bottoms or tops (no jeans or logos please) can therefore be worn in the first instance until the shops are opened. Shoes or trainers should be dark coloured. Children can continue to come in their PE kits or forest school clothing on the day those lessons will take place.

PE kit (white or red plain t-shirt and dark shorts/leggings or joggers) together with trainers for outdoor PE and plimsolls for indoors. Plain sweatshirts may be needed for sessions when the weather is cooler.

## **School Meals**

All dinners whether provided by school or brought in from home will be eaten in children's classrooms in their year group

## **Playtimes**

We are not operating staggered playtimes, but our year groups will remain in their bubble and will not be allowed to interact with other bubbles. Although there is no social distancing between children in each bubble, they will be discouraged from hugging each other and playing any contact games.

## **Breakfast Club and Kids Cabin After-School Provision**

Breakfast Club will be starting at 7.30am from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Kids Cabin are also opening on the 8<sup>th</sup> and have got an offer on their provision until the end of the summer term. Please contact the school office for more information.

## **NHS Test and Trace**

The school continues to engage with the NHS Test and Trace process. In addition, parents and carers will be expected to keep the school informed of any test results. Parents and carers will also be expected to provide details of anyone they or their child have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for COVID-19

The school will send out information to parents and carers on the advice of the health protection team if we become aware that someone in school has tested positive for COVID-19.

## **School Office and Communication**

We encourage communication via telephone or email; however, if parents or carers need to speak directly with the office staff we are operating a one way system with only one person permitted in the reception area at any one time. Access to school reception will be up the ramp, there are floor markings 2 metres apart for queuing; exit from the reception area will be via the door leading down the steps.

In order to protect the staff, it will not be possible for you to have a direct conversation at the classroom door unless in exceptional circumstances. I understand that this has not always been received positively and I want to reassure parents that your communication with us is very important and there is no intention at any time to upset our parents; but staff are being asked to limit direct contact with parents, particularly at the classroom door where social distancing is difficult at the beginning and end of the school day. This pandemic has certainly been demanding on all levels with parents, school staff and children having to deal with their own anxieties and challenges during this time.

If you would like to speak to a member of staff, please message on Class Dojo or contact the office and request a phone call – staff will be happy to contact you when mutually convenient.

## **Face Coverings**

From 8<sup>th</sup> March your child may notice more members of staff wearing face coverings around school. The guidance has recently been updated for staff in primary schools. The government is recommending the use of face covering for staff when moving around the school or in communal areas. This additional precautionary measure is in response to the currently high coronavirus prevalence in the community and will be in place until Easter. Staff will not be expected to teach whilst wearing a face covering and there continues to be no recommendation for children to wear a face covering or face mask in school.

## **Swimming (KS2 Only)**

Swimming will not take place during this academic year. The situation will be reviewed during the term and it is highly likely that we will be able to resume our swimming programme in KS2 for the next academic year. Parents and carers will be kept updated.

I hope the information is useful in your preparations for the return to school. Please contact the school office or your child's class teacher if you have any questions.

kind regards



E Roberts