

Thursday 9th July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Last week the government released their plan for all children, in all year groups, to return to school full-time from the beginning of the Autumn Term; see the end of the letter for information from the guidance. I am sure that you share our excitement at this announcement and having spoken to staff, everyone is very much looking forward to welcoming the children back.

The government guidance is clear that school attendance will be mandatory again from the Autumn Term. This means that you as parents do not have the option to withdraw your children and keep them at home. Understandably some of you will have some worries about this return. With this in mind, if you have any health concerns relating to your child, please contact the school by the end of term to discuss this with the SENCO or headteacher.

These are the main things to note:

- All year groups will be back full time in September
- School attendance will be mandatory for all from the Autumn Term
- Children will be taught in their own class of 30 for the majority of the time
- Bubbles will be formed of two year groups in order to manage playtimes and lunchtimes
- Bubbles will be kept apart from other bubbles
- Older children will be encouraged to keep their distance within groups
- Younger children will not be expected to maintain social distancing
- Some mixing will be possible for clubs and wrap-around-care but more guidance will follow on this
- Staff are encouraged to maintain a 2 metre distance from each other and from the children where possible although we know that this will not always happen
- Classrooms for Year 2 – Year 6 will be re-arranged with seating side by side and facing forward
- Unnecessary furniture will be taken out of classrooms to make more space
- We are asked to avoid large gatherings such as assemblies
- Break and lunchtime will be staggered
- Start and end times will be staggered to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave school
- Drop off and collections should avoid any parents gathering at the school gates or on the school site
- Children will need to clean their hands more regularly including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, when they change rooms and before and after eating
- The school office and classrooms can not be accessed by parents without an appointment
- Classroom based resources can be shared within the class but will be cleaned regularly
- Outdoor play equipment can be used but will be cleaned more regularly
- Children should limit the amount of equipment they bring but bags are allowed with lunch boxes, hats, coats and books.
- Children can take reading books home
- School day trips will be resuming where safe to do so
- Enhanced cleaning arrangements will continue
- There is a requirement that those who are unwell stay at home – more detailed information for what to do when someone becomes unwell will follow
- Volunteers can still be in school but will be asked to work with a bubble rather than across the school

We have also been asked to plan for the possibility of any future local lockdown and are working on this currently. Whilst there is much to consider and organise over the next few weeks, pleasingly a great deal of the guidance is already in place as a result of the wider reopening of schools over the last month. Below are some quotes from the guidance for your information.

The [Guidance for Full Opening](#) documents state that *'when the decision was made to ask schools to open only to a small number of children, this was done with the aim of reducing transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), to protect the NHS and save lives.'*

Now, the circumstances have changed. The prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased, our NHS Test and Trace system is up and running, and we are clear about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments within schools.

The system of controls provides a set of principles and if schools follow this advice, they will effectively minimise risks. All elements of the system of controls are essential. All schools must cover them all, but the way different schools implement some of the requirements will differ based on their individual circumstances.

We are in the process of implementing plans at each school in the trust to minimise risks and to reduce the number of contacts that take place.

Thank you for your support across the last few months. As a community we have shown true togetherness and whilst this will not be a full return to normal, things appear to be moving in the right direction. Next week we will send more details about the arrangements for the beginning of term, including start and pick up times and drop off guidance.

James Roach – CEO, Inclusive Multi Academy Trust

Jess Bruce – Headteacher, Cherry Tree School

Gillian Jackson – Headteacher, Beechfield School

Sebastian Gray – Headteacher, Laurance Haines School