10.7.20

Dear Parents,

The Department for Education have now produced guidelines on how schools should reopen as safely as possible in September and we are writing to tell you about some of the changes that we will be putting in place. Over the last few weeks we have trialled some of these changes with the children who have been attending and we feel that we have developed a good understanding of what does and doesn’t work.

The guidance contains three main aspects:

1. Keeping the children in ‘bubbles’ where they do not mix with others outside their class.
2. Asking the children to socially distance as far as possible.
3. Enhanced personal hygiene and cleaning practices.

It is accepted that the bubble model is easier to follow in smaller schools and with younger children and that social distancing works better with older children (particularly secondary school pupils), using both models as far as possible minimises risks.

We will be:

* Keeping children in class bubbles
* Staggering start and finish times slightly (we have found that leaving large gaps really doesn’t work)
* Staggering playtimes and using zones for the different bubbles
* Serving meals in classrooms to most children (we may use the hall for one bubble)
* Having collective worship in classrooms
* Only allowing parents to enter the school by appointment
* Discouraging parents from congregating at the gate
* Providing individual sets of frequently used equipment and hand sanitiser for children from Y1 upwards
* Washing our hands – a lot!
* Spending a lot of time outdoors
* Keeping doors and windows open whenever possible
* Continuing to operate an enhanced cleaning schedule

**What are the staggered start and finish times?**

We will be using both the gates at the front of the school, staff will be there to greet your child and they will be directed to their classroom via the outside door, they will not be congregating on the playground. The gates will not be opened before 8.55am, please do not send your child early.

Main Gate Side Gate

9.00 – 9.05 Class 4 9.00 – 9.05 Class 3

9.05 – 9.10 Class 1 9.05 – 9.10 Class 2

Pick up from the same gates

3.25 Class 1 3.25 Class 2

3.30 Class 4 3.30 Class 3

We know it is tempting to stay and chat but please do just drop and go.

**Does my child have to return to school in September?**

Yes – the DfE have been very clear that all children should return to school unless they have been advised not to do so by a doctor.

**Do children have to remain 2m apart?**

No – according to the DfE this was never recommended in schools. In order to fit all the children into classrooms they will be sharing desks as normal. Children are asked to avoid touching each other but it is recognised that the younger they are the more difficult this is.

**Can children bring things into school?**

We have been asked to minimise things brought into school so no soft toys or show and tell things for the moment please.

Please only send your child to school on a bike or scooter if it genuinely makes a difference to their journey. Bikes and scooters may be parked on the rack as normal.

Children may bring in book bags, packed lunches and water bottles (water only, no juice please).

**Will before and after school club be running?**

Yes but it will be running from the school hall and children will be separated into the same bubbles that they are in through the day. Please see details on the final page.

**Will staff be wearing PPE?**

Staff working with children will not be wearing PPE unless providing intimate care or caring for an ill child.

**What happens if there is a case of Covid 19 in School?**

Schools have a dedicated helpline for any suspected or confirmed cases and would take advice immediately, procedures are as follows:

* Any child showing symptoms will be isolated and their parents told to collect them
* A test will be arranged as a matter of urgency
* If the test is positive any pupils or staff who have been in close contact will be asked to self-isolate following current guidelines.
* If there are multiple confirmed cases the school may be required to close.

**What happens if there is a local lockdown?**

Schools have been asked to ensure that they are still able to provide online learning if they are required to close.

**What hasn’t changed?**

Children will be expected to wear school uniform.

Milk will be provided free for under 5s and may be ordered from Cool Milk for older children.

Fruit will be provided for nursery, reception, year 1 and year 2 children. Older children may bring their own fruit/veg into school but no other snacks.

School dinners will be provided free for children in reception, year 1 and year 2 and those on free school meals, **school meals are available to buy at £2.20 per day, £11 per week.** No chocolate or sweets in packed lunches please.

**What else has changed?**

Currently we are not allowed to take children on residential trips, in the probable event that White Hall is cancelled we will be issuing refunds. Local trips are allowed but we are being discouraged from using public transport or parent cars so we have nothing planned at the moment. We hope to plan some trips in for later in the year. There will be no school swimming in the first half term.

There will be no good work assemblies for parents until social distancing measures are further relaxed.

Where clubs operate, e.g. bible club or football club, they will be for one class ‘bubble’ only.

**What about the catch up sessions the government has promised?**

We have staff available to teach catch up sessions to individuals and small groups but are waiting for government guidance on which interventions they recommend and if they would like us to operate a priority system. We will be ready to provide sessions from September if we are given the go-ahead by the DfE. Teachers will put additional materials on the online learning platform for those children who wish to continue with home learning over the summer.

**What should parents do?**

Keep an eye on Facebook and the website for any updates.

Talk to your child about changes in school, stay positive and reassure them.

Let us know if they have experienced trauma or loss so we can plan how best to support them.

Keep your child at home if they have any symptoms of Covid 19:

* a high temperature
* a new continuous cough
* a loss or change to the senses of smell and taste

If anyone in the family has symptoms stay at home (self-isolate) and get a test as soon as possible.

Please act responsibly and follow social distancing guidelines outside of school.

Please use info@tintwistle.derbyshire.sch.uk with any information or queries, please do not phone over the summer holiday as the office is not staffed. Please don’t contact us through Facebook as it is not monitored.

**Moving Forward**

We know that there is a great deal of anxiety for some parents and children over returning to school and would like to reassure you that Tintwistle is the same friendly, caring place that it always has been. We will be working with the children on their feelings and emotions and understand that they may be a bit ‘wobbly’. I can also promise you that we haven’t forgotten how to have fun! Those children who have been able to return have settled very quickly and are really enjoying spending time with their friends. I never thought that I would find myself spending July looking forward to September but there is a first for everything! We know that there will be aspects of school life that are missing (particularly for parents) and will continue to review the guidance, hopefully moving steadily towards normal. We know that it will be harder for parents to stay connected so please do keep talking to us and tell us if there is anything we can help with. We look forward to seeing you all on **Thursday 3rd September.** Stay safe and have a lovely summer.

Jo Griffin, Headteacher

**Before and After School Club September 2020**

Schools have been asked to open before and after school clubs wherever it is practicable to do so, implementing safety measures as far as possible.

Breakfast club will run from 8.00am to 9.00am and will cost £4 for the hour.

After school club will run from 3.30pm to 5.30pm and will cost £4 for each hour, £8 for the full session.

Neither club will be providing food, children are welcome to bring a healthy snack (no sweets or chocolate please).

Both clubs will now be based in the school hall, which will be zoned for the four class bubbles. Each group of children will have separate equipment in an area of the hall.

Running the clubs in four separate bubbles will bring some logistical challenges but we do feel that this can be done safely.

The clubs will continue to offer a range of construction, craft and play activities using a full range of equipment, but equipment cannot be swapped between groups without cleaning or resting. Miss Crookes will be running breakfast club and Mrs Coleman after school club.

In order for us to offer the best possible experience to the children it is important that we know in advance who will be attending so that we can match activities to your child’s interests and select appropriate resources.

We understand that some parents work on varying shift patterns and we have the flexibility to cover this, but we would like to ask that all bookings are made by the Friday morning of the previous week.

If you already know that your child needs to attend club from September please phone the office on 01457852611 or email us on info@tintwistle.derbyshire.sch.uk. to book sessions. Please include a general idea any preferred activities your child may have and we will do our best to find something suitable.

In order to attend breakfast or after school club your child must follow the school expectations of behaviour. This is particularly important whilst we are following Covid 19 restrictions.