

Wednesday 20th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your emails regarding a place for your child. All parents that have applied have been allocated a place and will receive a letter about the arrangements and dates for returning to school later this week. We recognise that many children are not ready to return just yet and we understand your reasoning. We all hope that progress can be made Globally regarding Covid19 in order to enable us all to return to our 'normal' lives.

May Half Term is next week

- No learning will be set on Google Classroom.
- Woodlands will remain open for Critical Worker children Tuesday to Friday, please book sessions as normal.
- The kitchens will be closed so please send in a packed lunch.
- We are getting rooms ready for opening, so children are now based in the hall. Please enter and collect from the KS1 playground lower door.
- The school office will also be closed. Please contact school through postbox@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk

As you may imagine, we have been rather busy in school planning how to make our school safe for our children and staff.

We have made many changes that I need to share with you, I apologise in advance that there is a great deal of information in great detail within this letter. I will summarise with as many bullet points as possible!

Safety leads in the planning, however we cannot eradicate all risk despite our best intentions and parents need to be aware that any social contact does raise the risk level.

Our space has been greatly reduced due to 2m distancing in each learning room from Y1 to Y6. Therefore, our maximum capacity in each room is between 9 and 11 children depending upon the size of the room.

Our priority of offering spaces for children has been dictated by government guidelines, listed in their order of priority:

- Critical Workers provision
- Nursery
- Reception
- Y1
- Y6

We have not forgotten about our other year groups in any way and are mindful of their learning needs so we shall endeavour to ensure that Google Classroom will continue for every child.

Significant changes include:

- Rigorous hygiene routine with a high level of hand washing
- In years Y1 to Y6 children will sit 2m apart
- Staggered entry into school
- Staggered break times
- Staggered exit from school
- Staggered and shortened lunchtime
- Early closure to enable staff to clean their rooms and resources, whilst cleaners rigorously clean the shared areas.
- Friday – school will only be open to Critical Worker children. This will enable Teachers to plan for their three different groups of children whilst intensive cleaning is undertaken across the school. It also provides time in case there are any bugs or germs in the school, they will die over the 72 hours before we start again on Monday.

The Timetable (Dependant on the latest safety advice Nationally)

- **1st June onwards – only Critical Worker children in school. They will continue to have daily access throughout the Summer Term.**
- **8th June onwards – Critical worker children and other children that have applied for a place in N, YR, Y1 and Y6.**
- **15th June internal review of current provision for N, R, Y1 and Y6. Possible changes to current plan if more children want to join.**
- **22nd June – may be changes to days coming into school for N, R, Y1 and Y6.**

Family Groups

Woodlands has been organised into six family groups. These family groups will work, eat and play together with minimal mixing between groups.

We have tried to plan so that children are returning to their learning room and their own teacher with groupings of friendship – where possible. However, some children are not returning to their learning room nor their teacher.

The numbers of children dictate as to whether we can offer full time or part time for your child. Whereas, critical worker children will be able to attend daily and will join the family groups below.

Family Groups:

- Nursery with Mrs Thomason will be able to attend daily
- Reception with Mrs Price and Miss Bushell will attend alternate weeks
- Y1 with Miss Pottle and Miss Smith will be able to attend daily
- Y2 and Y3 children will be the lower critical worker family group and will be able to attend daily. Groups led by Mrs Rich, Miss Birch, Mrs Purcell / Mrs Corbett.
- Y4 and Y5 children will be the upper critical worker family group and will be able to attend daily. Groups led by Mrs Gill/Mrs Lippett and Mrs Dickson, Miss Gregory and Mrs Garcha
- Y6 children with Miss Evans, Miss Chapman and Miss Martin will be able to attend alternate weeks

If there is a positive case of Covid 19 then the whole of that family group will go into isolation at home whilst deep cleaning is undertaken in school.

If you change your mind and wish to send your child to school

Current space is limited and so we won't be able to accommodate any children that just turn up.

We aim to run the current plan for three weeks and then review year group spaces. We are aware that other parents may then feel more confident about their child returning to school. If your child is in one of the designated year groups and you feel that your child could return in three weeks, then please email school with your child's name and class, they will then be added to a waiting list.

Consequently, parents need to be aware that the planned provision might change in three weeks. If your child is now full time they might then change to part time if more children begin to attend.

Whereas full time provision for Critical Workers will continue throughout the half term on a daily basis

This is our intention, however we are mindful that guidelines and expectations at Government level do change daily.

Critical Workers

We have not faltered in our support of our Critical Worker families and this will continue. However, from the 1st June there are a couple of changes for Critical Worker Children:

- The new staggered entry and exit school times will apply

- Parents can book the days in school for their child through the postbox email or by the usual telephone number by the Friday of the week before, according to parent shift patterns
- Once a child is in school we will expect them to stay for the day, rather than collecting early
- Woodies provision, before and after school, will be available at the previous usual costs and will need to be booked and paid for

Learning and Google Classroom

Remote learning will continue. Your child may not be returning to school just yet but we want to do our very best to ensure that your child has the opportunity to continue learning.

Parents will need to be aware that teacher's workload is about to rise significantly, planning learning for potentially three different groups of children whilst teaching four full days.

- Paper packs for children at home can still be collected from the foyer on Wednesdays
- We will not print packs for children who will be in school full time.
- Teachers will not be able to engage in 1:1 remote provision due to their commitments. This will affect their messages on Google Classroom, they will not be marking posted work although will oversee returns and they will have less time to respond to parent emails. Please only email if it is important and be patient in waiting for a response.

Many parents are worried that their children will be behind in their learning. You are not alone. Every child in the Country will be in the same situation. We will have children at various stages of their learning, consequently we are planning for this into September and beyond into the next year. I shall provide further details at a later date. We ask that you continue to do what you are able to do. We greatly appreciate everything you have done for your child in terms of learning, every input, however small will have made a difference.

The provision in school will have a high emphasis on emotional wellbeing, re-establishing relationships and it will also be reintroducing children to the routines of life in school and how to learn. Learning will also link directly to Google Classroom as group leads manage different year groups in their new classes.

Contact with the school

We are reducing face to face contact with external visitors in all aspects. Visitors into school will be limited, with only essential visitors entering the building. Parents are asked to avoid the office foyer and to not 'chat' with staff when dropping off or collecting at any time of the day.

Therefore, we ask that any messages you need to pass on to teachers to be through the postbox email, or if they are urgent – then by telephone. You can also email teachers with important messages or questions, but please be aware that it is likely to be a number of days before teachers are able to respond. Likewise, if staff need to talk to you they will also telephone or email.

Staggered entry and exit into school

These are the busiest times of day when many people are in a smaller space together, so we have staggered arrival and exit times to reduce the number of people. We are also operating a one system onto and off the site, again to support social distancing.

We ask that parents observe these guidelines so we can all be safe.

- This system will require patience – it will take time.
- No cars enter the school car park during entry and exit times
- One Way System: Families queue out of school up towards Bloxwich Road North, along the pavement, following social distancing guidelines
- In through the pedestrian entrance up to the KS1 playground gate where staff will greet children and support them entering the playground and in through the correct door in the morning. In the afternoon, parents are asked to wait in a space on the KS1 playground, observing social distancing.
- To leave the site - parents loop through the car park onto Hunts Lane.
- Only one parent to attend, with small children if necessary
- Parents to enable the line to keep moving by not grouping to chat
- Parents to not 'chat' or pass messages to staff. Parents are requested to email messages into school through postbox, or telephone
- Parents are encouraged to walk to school and not drive down Hunts Lane due to families waiting along the pavement

Staggered entry into school

- 8:30 N through Nursery door, please don't cross the ramp rainbow
- 8:30 Y1 through KS1 door
- 8:30 Y4 and Y5 family group through KS2 door
- 8:45 Y2 and Y3 family group through KS1 door
- 8:45 Y6 through the back door off Bloxwich Road North
- 9:00 Reception through KS1 door
- 9:00 Families with siblings all bring through the KS2 door

- It is important that parents are on time
- If you are running late and miss your allocated slot, then please arrive at the last entry time of 9:00

Staggered exit from school

- Parents to wait in a space on the playground ensuring they practice the 2m social distancing guidelines
- Children will be brought to their exit door by a member of staff. We ask parents to call their child's name in turn.
- If you are running late and miss your pick up time, then your child will be taken back to the learning room they are working in. They will be brought back to the exit door at 3:00.
- No messages or conversation with staff on the door.

- 2:35 R through KS1 door
- 2:35 Y2/3 through KS2 door
- 2:50 Y1 through KS1 door
- 2:50 Y4/5 through KS2 door
- 2:50 Y6 through the back door onto Bloxwich Road North
- 3:00 Nursery from the ramp, please don't cross the rainbow
- 3:00 Children with siblings through KS2 door
- 3:00 Late children collected through KS1 door

Woodies

Woodies will only be available for our Critical Worker Children and they will operate by keeping the children in their separate family groups.

- It will start from 1st June.
- Will be based in separate sections of the hall before and after school (or outside)
- Entry and exit will be through the lower corridor door on the KS1 playground
- Please book and pay for sessions as you would have done previously.

Illness

We shall be over cautious and monitoring children carefully in terms of symptoms. We recognise that children have coughs and colds that are not Covid 19, but I am sure you understand that we can't take any chances, and so we will ask you to come and collect your child.

If anyone in your household does display the symptoms, then it is important that you don't send your child into school whilst you access the test and keep us updated.

No parent needs to worry about non-attendance during this term, we would rather everyone stayed safe.

Keeping Safe

Children don't socially distance, particularly when they are playing. We are putting many strategies in place, including space when children are lining up, desks from Y1 to Y6 2m apart, designated toilet times, walking on the left in corridors, reminding children about social distancing and not to touch each other. However, when children are on their breaks they will group and play together. Parents need to recognise that their children will have closer social contact through being at school.

These are just some of the measures that we are implementing in our very thorough risk assessment.

- Direct teaching of good hygiene practice
- Frequent handwashing routines
- 'Catch it, kill it, bin it' approach to sneezing
- Children will be reminded to not touch their face, eyes or nose
- Reminder posters around the building
- Children can wear masks and gloves if they choose
- Children can bring in their own sanitiser
- Please ensure items are clearly labelled with your child's name and class
- If your child has an accident in school that requires a 'clean-up' then we shall contact you to come up to school
- Reassuring upset children will not be easy when undertaking social distancing, particularly for our younger children. But please be reassured we shall do our best
- Children will be given their own key stationary, but will share other resources in their learning room with their family group
- Resources will be carefully selected so that they can be wiped clean by staff at the end of each day, or before the next group of children come into school.
- Teachers will be modifying their teaching approach to enable children to remain at 2m during learning time and to minimise movement around the learning space
- Windows and doors will be open to provide good ventilation
- Learning will take place outside when possible
- We aim to minimise the items that come into school and go home, so we ask that all learning packs are kept at home at this time. No reading books will be sent home, please use Bug Club.
- External visitors into school will be limited.
- Rigorous daily cleaning of the school environment by the whole team

Other General Information

- All children are expected to wear uniform the best that they can and if they can't because they have outgrown it, then as close to uniform as possible. Smart please. We dress for learning at Woodlands. It is the Summer term so children can wear Summer uniform, dresses and polo shirts with no ties.

- The exception is sports clothes for Critical Worker children on Friday.
- No jewellery, including watches and hair to be tied up.
- It is advised that children's clothes are removed and washed as soon as they come in from school
- The usual daily supply of milk and fruit for our younger children has stopped and there will be no tuck shop. Therefore, children may want to bring in a healthy snack for break time. This applies for children in Reception to Y6.
- There will only be toast and juice for our free school meal children in the morning so breakfast at home is important
- Inhalers – if your child has one then they must be returned to school. Please place in a named see through bag with your child.
- Frequent hand washing, every time they enter the learning room, every time they leave the learning room
- When children come into school they will go straight to their learning room, not onto the playground
- Children can bring in minimum amounts of stationary but be aware it is their responsibility to look after it
- Children can bring in labelled water bottles
- All their items will be placed on a spare chair at the side of them
- Children will walk on the left in all the corridors and stairs
- Children will need to use the toilet at designated times. (Unless they have specific needs or are younger)
- Children can bring in named water bottles
- The kitchens will be open so children can choose whether they bring a packed lunch or have a hot dinner, as normal.

Finally

I will be writing to each family group with further details specific to them over the next few days.

Please share relevant information from this letter with your child. We do not want them to feel anxious or worried. We want our children to be excited to return to school because we are excited to see them too. However, it will help for them to be prepared for the changes that they will find.

It isn't going to be easy, we anticipate it will take us a short while to get used to new routines so please allow time for responses from school staff and particularly for entry and exit from school. Just like picking up a loaf of bread can take over an hour, everything will take a little longer!

We are in a new normal, we shall all adjust as long as we are kind and considerate towards each other. Thank you to all our Woodlands family for your continued support, we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Yours sincerely,

T G Newton Head Teacher