

Friday 11th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well, we have certainly been surprised by the enthusiastic return of our children. They are bottles of pop fizzing with energy. We are really pleased to see how happy our children are in school.

This week, children have taken the step into their new year group and are now based in their new learning room with their new teacher. The week has seen a focus on induction: Settling in, learning new routines and thinking about wellbeing, with daily lessons on emotions and strategies we can use to manage emotions.

Next week we shall lean more towards remembering and implementing our learning behaviours. Staff have already started to assess where our children are in their learning journey and this will continue during September. Children will undertake end of year assessments for last year during the next couple of weeks in a very supportive way, they aren't to worry about what they don't know at all and are asked to only do their best. This will help staff identify what your child knows and what they still need to learn from their previous academic year.

Nursery and Reception children have also started their transition plan this week and our EYFS staff are grinning from ear to ear – what lovely children! They have shown courage, excitement and lovely manners. Welcome to Woodlands EYFS!

All the children have adjusted wonderfully to our new school year and all the changes. I think they enjoy a number of them, including the introduction of afternoon break times (due to a shorter lunch) and each year group having the playground all to themselves at breaks and lunchtime.

It has been a little more tricky for staff to start the new school year as we all have adjusted to brand new systems and routines, plus longer teaching days. There is a great deal to remember and implement and that is before we start to think about teaching and learning... We are continuing to refine these new systems on a daily basis so that our school can run as smoothly as possible under the current circumstances.

Current Covid Circumstances

A huge thank you to parents who are communicating really well with us if their child is feeling unwell and if they feel it necessary to go for a test, or a member of the household has undertaken a test. This is really important so that we can keep everyone safe.

If your child is displaying one of the three covid symptoms, then please keep your child at home so you can monitor what develops. We are fully aware that a temperature can develop into a cold but it is best to be safe.

I am sure you have heard on the news about schools sending home 'bubbles' if a child or member of staff tests positive. If a child or staff member did test positive at

Woodlands then we will immediately contact the Local Protection Team for next steps advice. This would likely involve a year group being sent home to isolate for fourteen days. In this situation we shall contact all families in this year group and ask that you collect your child as soon as possible.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

The rest of the household doesn't need to isolate and the child doesn't need to go for a test unless they develop covid symptoms.

We really do hope this doesn't happen at Woodlands but I think we all need to be prepared that this is a possibility in the current circumstances.

Entry and Exit Plans

Entry into school is flowing well. Thank you to our families for arriving at their correct times and being quick with their goodbye hugs and kisses so children can enter school and keep the line flowing. The entry plan will remain the same. With the addition of Reception entering school through the KS1 playground gate from Wednesday 16th September when they start full time. Nursery will continue to enter by the Nursery ramp.

Exit plans aren't going so well for a number of reasons. Organising children into sibling groups is incredibly challenging in school. It takes a high number of staff and interrupts learning in all classes from mid-afternoon as children are gathered. Whilst children are waiting, it is difficult to keep them in their separate family groups as children merge from across several families, which raises the risk of possible transmission. 'Sibling' groups and plans change daily for a number of families which means we are trying to accommodate and remember daily changes. Two further year groups are also about to begin full time as Nursery and Reception near the end of their transition plans, which will place greater pressure on our already stretched capacity in school.

It takes a significant number of staff to implement this plan for siblings and non-siblings, and if a staff member is not present then the system will fail. We have tried the plan for a week but do not have the capacity to continue in the long term. However, we do recognise the benefits of dismissing siblings at the same time so parents can enter and leave the site quickly – we have tried to accommodate this in the new plan.

Therefore, we have a new exit plan which will begin on Wednesday 16th September for Reception to Y6. (Nursery to continue their transition plan)

All children will be dismissed from the front of the school in their house groups (colour of PE t-shirt) which means families will be dismissed at the same time. Groups are in alphabetical order:

**ALL children leave in house groups for ALL year groups from the FRONT of the school.
Please arrive at school at the correct time for your children**

3:00 Blue house
3:10 Green house
3:20 Red house
3:30 Yellow house

Parents move to the appropriate doors to collect their child, so dismissal is safe.

- **Reception - EYFS outdoor space door**
- **Y1 lower playground door**
- **Y2 lower playground door**
- **Y3 upper playground door**
- **Y4 upper playground door**
- **Y5 next to upper playground steps to the right**
- **Y6 next to upper playground steps to the left**

We appreciate that the current plan works well for our families but it is incredibly challenging in school and therefore we need a plan that is viable in the long term. I really do apologise for the further change, I understand the difficulties of coordinating family life, school and work, and that these changes will present challenges for some of our families.

PE days

Gold stars to families that remembered children can wear their PE kit all day on PE days but please don't worry if you didn't remember, all children joined in the lessons. As the weather turns cooler, I would recommend a navy blue tracksuit rather than shorts. Children will need to wear their house coloured t shirt and can wear trainers.

- Reception - Tuesday
- Y1 – Wednesday
- Y2 – Monday
- Y3 - Tuesday
- Y4 - Wednesday
- Y5 – Friday
- Y6 – Thursday

Nursery will undertake a variety of activities during each week that focus on physical development. They will start their formal PE lessons during next half term so they will need their PE kit for then.

Snack for Nursery to Y2

I am pleased to share that the government scheme of a snack of fruit and vegetables for our children in Nursery to Y2 has been resumed. Therefore, children in these year groups do not need to bring in a snack for mid-morning.

Year Group Emails

Staff are unable to 'chat' face to face at entry and exit at this time which can make it difficult when you need to share something important with your class teacher so we have year group emails for this purpose. However, please only use these when really necessary. Staff are currently under a great deal of pressure so a response to your email will take time.

nursery@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk
reception@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk
year1@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk
year2@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk
year3@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk
year4@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk
year5@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk
year6@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk

The main school email is postbox@woodlands.walsall.sch.uk.

School term and holiday dates are attached to the newsletter for your family diaries

The sun promises to shine this weekend, so let's enjoy it whilst it lasts.

Mrs Newton





School Term and Holiday Dates. 

Autumn Term 2020 / 2021	
Monday 1 September 2020	Term Starts
Mon 1 st & Tues 2 nd September 2020	Staff Training Days – Closed for pupils
Friday 23 rd October 2020 (Provisional – TBC)	Staff Training Day – Closed for pupils
Mon 28 th October 2020 – Fri 1 st November 2020	Half Term Holidays
Friday 20 th December 2020	Last Day of Term
Mon 21 st December 2020 – Fri 1 st January 2021	End of Term Holidays



Spring Term 2020 / 2021	
Monday 4 th January 2021	Term Starts
Monday 4 th January 2021	Staff Training Day – Closed for pupils
Mon 15 th February 2021 – Fri 19 th February 2021	Half Term Holidays
Monday 18 th January 2021 (Provisional – TBC)	Staff Training Day – Closed for pupils
Thursday 1 st April 2021	Last Day of Term
Fri 2 nd April 2021 – Fri 16 th April 2021	End of Term Holidays

Summer Term 2020 / 2021	
Monday 19 th April 2021	Term Starts
Monday 3 rd May 2021	May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed
Mon 31 st May 2021 – Fri 4 th June 2021	Half Term
Wednesday 21 st July 2021	Staff Training Day – Closed for pupils
Wednesday 21 st July 2021	Last Day of Term