

Thursday 23th July 2020

Welcome back guidance!

Thank you for your patience whilst we gather together this welcome back guidance and information for you all.

I will be in school until Thursday 30th July next week, so if you do have any questions do not hesitate to ring school, leave a message as the answer machine will be on and I will get back to you asap.

Back to school

School will be very different for children returning. With the support of your child's basic social story that is in the achievement and progress packs being posted to you, we hope that this will support the children returning to school.

Our school and all schools in Tameside will be doing everything we can to follow the guidance we have been issued from the DfE, Public Health England and Tameside Local Authority to keep everyone safe.

As previously shared it is with great pleasure that following a phased return in September our school will open its doors to almost all pupils. The staff will be preparing for this during the summer and will have a training day on Tuesday 1st September.

In September our children will return to the class that they were in this school year and with the same staff team from this school year too. This will enable us to baseline their needs and support transition after the October holidays into their new planned classrooms. We will share the information about your child's new class and staff team at the end of September 2020.

We have split the class groups into two groups to support the phased return and have continued to support key workers where possible. Children will be in a Team A or Team B and will have set days to attend school during the phased return. During the phased return there will be low numbers of children in your child's class bubble with a high ratio of staff support, during this period of transition.

Almost all children, if following a review of the school risk assessment and following Government and Local authority guidance will start school full time, every day from Monday 14th September 2020.

Please refer to your letter sharing your child's phased return dates.

The information below will help the safe return to school -

Parents and carers will need to help too; we will be putting the following in place:

Start of the day/end of the day

You will be given set times to drop off and collect children so we can try to safely manage this and ensure there is minimal contact – 2m distancing between members not in your household can be adhered to. By doing this we are reducing the people on the school premises. Specific arrangements have been agreed with SEN transport.

If you bring your child to school in your car please **arrive at 9.10am and 3pm and not before**, you will be asked to wait in a queuing system before coming onto site so we can regulate numbers unloading or loading. You will be asked to please ensure that a member of staff is aware you have arrived then remain in your car, until a member of staff arrives to receive your child or brings your child to you. Please remain appropriately social distancing and then return to your car, when your child leaves with a member of staff. This will be the same for all arrivals and departures to site. Please do not get out to talk to other parents or wait at the gates. Staff have been advised to keep conversations at the start and end of the day to a minimum to ensure the flow traffic.

If you walk to school with your child you will be asked to bring your child alone where possible. You will be asked to wait by the garage for your child to be collected or to receive your child at the end of the day, **at 9.10am and 3pm and not before**.

- Only one adult can accompany their child when dropping off/collecting.
- No adults are permitted to enter the building, including the main office area. Instead we request that you ring us on 0161 367 9299 and leave a message on the answer machine or email Jo.mellor@oakdale.tameside.sch.uk
- Children will be required to wear their uniform, which according to health advice must be clean on each day. If you are struggling to have a clean uniform daily, I am happy to receive children in appropriate school coloured clothing, royal blue or navy blue or black with white/light coloured t-shirts.

SEN Transport

SEN transport have really worked hard and I have been proud of their efforts to keep our children safe during lockdown and wider opening provision. Each size/type of minibus must only have a certain number of children on with the escort and driver for each journey. The drivers/escorts clean the vehicles down after dropping the children off and prepare for receiving the children. It has been reassuring. The escort and drivers do wear masks to support the children and themselves on the journey.

SEN transport are creating a plan of action over the summer holidays to further decide in consultation with school about the grouping of children on the buses and to minimise risks whilst transporting your child into school.

Class bubbles/contact

Each child and member of staff will remain in their class bubble throughout the day.

Contact between individuals and mixing between 'bubble' groups will be minimised whilst the full curriculum will be delivered.

Each class will have assigned workrooms where needed.

The use of the hall and PE equipment will only be used by class bubble groups only. The sensory processing room will have reduced numbers accessing the room. For both uses the equipment at the end of each sessions will be cleaned with antibacterial wipes.

Health and safety

We will continue to review your child's risk assessment to identify any additional support or provision that may be needed to keep them safe.

Our school risk assessment has been approved by our Governing Body, the Covid-19 Panel and has been checked by the Health & Safety experts at Tameside Local Authority. It takes reasonable steps, in compliance with national guidance, to protect pupils, staff and others from Covid-19 within our educational setting. It will be monitored and reviewed each fortnight. There will be a copy available on the school website next week.

Break times

The children will remain in their 'class bubble' and have an allocated playground area/time. This will support us to best manage keeping children away from other children in different class bubbles.

Dinner arrangements

Robertson's Catering will provide school dinners for all those in school entitled to a universal or free school meal.

Dinners will be eaten either in the classrooms or dining hall in staggered sittings with only a low number of class groups in the hall, so that the groups of children do not mix and each group will have their own playtime. There will be seven sittings in the hall for dinner times to manage reduced/managed numbers in the hall.

Resources

To try and minimise sharing, we will ensure that there are enough resources for each child when taking part in a taught session. Nothing else should be brought from home.

Equipment and resources are integral to education. During the summer term, their use was minimised, many were moved out of classrooms, and there was significant extra cleaning. That position has now changed for the autumn term, because prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has decreased and because they are so important for the delivery of education. For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, it is recommended that staff and pupils have their own items that are not shared. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the bubble; these should be cleaned

regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, and sensory equipment should be cleaned meticulously between bubbles, or rotated to allow them to be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.

Specialist equipment

We are currently working with ISCAN to make an assessment of the 'cleanability' of equipment used in the delivery of therapies (for example. physiotherapy equipment, sensory equipment), to determine whether this equipment can withstand cleaning and disinfection between each use (and how easy or practical it would be to do so) before it is put back into general use. Where cleaning or disinfection is not possible or practical, resources will have to be restricted to one user, or be left unused for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different individuals.

Visiting professionals and therapists

Specialists, therapists, clinicians and other support staff for pupils with SEND will be supported to provide their interventions as usual. We will ensure they minimise contact and maintain as much distance as possible from other staff and pupils where possible. We will provide a site guidance on physical distancing and hygiene for visitors on or before arrival. Where visits can happen outside of school, they will be encouraged. A record will be kept of all visitors.

First Aiders

We have a good number of trained first aiders, to support our provision.

Hand Washing, respiratory hygiene and Social Distancing

We will be asking the children to regularly wash their hands with soap and water and to use the sanitiser, with the support of staff. There are lots of visuals and social stories to support the children.

Where possible children and staff try to support social distancing. However due to the nature of the needs of our children this is difficult. We aim instead to manage the risk, by minimising the contact and other approaches such as managing class bubbles.

Masks and other PPE are not needed during the school day by the staff, except during personal care time and any specific medical procedures.

We will be promoting good respiratory hygiene. There will be tissues in school to support the children.

Toilets/personal care/PPE

To ease congestion we have assigned set toilets to each class bubble. During personal care time staff will wear PPE. A social story will be shared with children to support this. We will greatly consider any anxiety that the wearing of PPE may cause the children and support them accordingly. We will liaise with you if needed.

COVID-19 related illness

A pupil or staff member who has symptoms of Covid-19 or lives with someone who does, must not come into school. It is paramount that you inform us of this and adhere to the current 14 days self-isolation.

Any children presenting with coronavirus symptoms will immediately be isolated with support of a member of staff, in a room that will support them well during this time of isolation. There will be an expectation that your child will be collected as soon as a member of senior leadership team calls and informs you accordingly. There will be PPE equipment in such circumstances and engagement with the LA Health Protection Team and the NHS Test and Trace Process. The Health Protection Team will work with the school to assess the risk, respond to 'direct or proximity contacts' and advise the school and families on next steps.

We would like to assure you that our school will operate in line with the national guidance. We have worked to balance health and safety considerations with the best possible educational experience, in such circumstances.

Cleaning

As I'm sure you're all aware, cleaning continues to be key. Throughout lockdown and wider opening we have prided ourselves on a high standard of cleaning to support keeping our children and staff safe. We will continue to have very high expectations and standards for our daily cleaning of the school.

Throughout the day we will have a member of staff that will clean the frequently used areas across school such as door handles and the door hand plates and will ensure that the PPE in each class is well stocked.

Throughout the day class staff will ensure enhanced cleaning of resources, desks and work chair trays to reduce the risks.

Attendance

The national guidance makes clear that the current improvements to the Covid19 situation and the significant risk to life-chances and educational opportunity of missing school mean that attendance at school is compulsory to all pupils. The good news for our pupils is that we expect all or almost all staff to be with us over the Autumn term as we open for the new academic year.

Where some pupils are no longer required to shield, but remain under the care of a specialist health professional will discuss their care with their health professional and where appropriate public health, before returning to school in September. Where a pupil is unable to attend their setting because they are complying with clinical or

public health advice, we will offer them access to remote education. We will monitor engagement with this activity but absence will not be penalised.

Educational visits

There will be no educational visits during the first part of the Autumn term.

A Broad & Balanced Curriculum for All

We are planning to spend the first half of the Autumn term to prioritise and to address any gaps in the pupils' skills or changes of need, focusing on the children's readiness to learning to help develop prime areas of learning, including communication, personal, social and emotional development and physical development. Re-establishing and developing these skills will ensure their abilities to access the school curriculum provision.

Throughout the school year we will continue to offer a high quality education that promotes their development and prepares them for a wide variety of opportunities.

Our curriculum will remain broad and ambitious ensuring that we will teach a range of subjects, but maintaining using the curriculum that will meet their needs and support them to develop new or maintain strategies to learn new skills.

We are very passionate to ensure that we will regularly review and monitor our children's wellbeing and support any emotional needs following return to school.

Catch up funding

In addition to the above, we have been promised funding from the government to offer 'catch-up' and tuition beyond the normal offer. As soon as we have the money and the details we will put that in place where it is needed most.

Contingency plans

The school is also preparing a contingency plan of remote/blended (home and school) teaching and learning, just in case any part of the school, local area or the country has to re-enter full or partial lockdown. Let us hope we do not need to use it.

These are challenging times for us all. Many of you will be anxious to get back to a sense of normality but many will be worried about sending children back to school. We will do everything we can to respond to the guidance given by the government but will also be ensuring that we do this safely.

In the meantime, stay safe everyone. If you have any further questions, please give us a ring.

Kindest regards

Tina

Mrs Tina Tray
Head teacher