

Dear Parents/Carers,

3rd March 2021



I am writing to give you further information re our full return to school on 8th March. We're really looking forward to the children coming back to school, as well as welcoming some new children, and hope that it will bring some normality back into their lives. I know that the children have been busy at home with the activities Mrs Dunham has been setting but I am sure they will be happy to come to school, see their friends and enjoy playing and learning together. It's so important for them.

We will be returning to the set-up we had for the autumn term.

The government have published further guidance with regard to returning to school and we have built this into our revised plan so there are some small changes.

Most of this information you will know already but I thought it would be useful to remind you of the arrangements. Please read it carefully.

It will be crucial for us all to follow this guidance and take all the necessary precautions to ensure everyone's safety.

This letter contains information regarding starting school which is specific to children who are in Pre-School.

Just to remind you:

Bumblebees attend on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning

Ladybirds attend on a Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday

Caterpillars attend all week.

As per government guidance we are operating in bubbles – our Pre-School children are one bubble. They will not mix directly with any children other than those in Pre-School.

Start and End of the Day for Pre-School

Children to come to school between 9:00 and 9:10 and finish between 3:00 and 3:10

Pre-School children should be accompanied by **ONE** adult only.

ALL PARENTS SHOULD WEAR A MASK WHEN ON SITE. *If there is a medical reason that you cannot wear a mask then please wear a lanyard indicating this and ensure it is visible on the outside of your coat so that all can see that you exempt from this. Thank you in advance for doing this.*

Entrance to school is via the main entrance car park between 9:00 and 9:10. Parents and children should follow the arrows on the ground, walking through the main entrance car park on the left hand side, following the 2m lines to ensure social distancing. You will follow the directions up to the entrance to the cage where you'll turn right and follow the covered walkway up to where you turn left to go towards Pre-School. Enter the Pre-School area (green rubber surface with canopy) and wait on one of the socially distanced spots.

One of the adults from Pre-School will then greet your child and they'll go into the Pre-School setting through the main door. Your child will then hang their coat and bag up and go and wash their hands. You will then leave taking the same route you entered school by, ensuring you distance from others at all times.

Good time keeping will be important. You and your child should not enter the school grounds until 9:00 a.m. and should arrive no later than 9:10.

When you come to pick your child up at the end of the school day please enter school in the same way you did in the morning. Come between 3:00 and 3:10. Please don't enter the school grounds until 3:00.

Wait on the socially distanced spots in the Pre-School area and your child will be brought out to you. Leave the school grounds taking the same route as before, continuing to maintain social distance.

Wednesday drop offs and collections (Bumblebees and Ladybirds) will be at the same entrance as above. Children should be brought into school in the same way, accompanied by one adult and directed by a staff member. Please be prompt for 11.30 collections and 12.45 drop offs. You will just have to wait for a member of staff to come and open the gate.

We do have a few requirements to ensure safety of all. It seems like a lot of information but it's not really and once your child starts school it will become second nature.

Your child should come in their school uniform every day. We are mindful that some may have outgrown their uniform. If this is the case and you have not been able to source new uniform yet, please send your child into school in plain, practical clothing but try to get new uniform as soon as possible.

Before coming to school we ask you to ensure the following:-

- If your child is unwell in any way, then they must not attend school and you **must** inform the school on the first day of illness and keep us up to date after that. This is more important than ever, given the circumstances. If you leave message on the answer machine please be clear with the description of your child's illness and if in any doubt, please contact your doctor or ring 111
- If your child has any symptoms of Covid-19 – temperature, cough or loss of taste and smell – they should not attend school and you should arrange for them to have a test
- If anyone in your house has any possible symptoms related to Covid-19, your child can't attend school until the person concerned is tested. Again – please let us know this.
- Get your child to go to the toilet just before leaving the house
- Ensure your child washes their hands thoroughly before leaving the house
- Please make sure your child can manage all of their clothing – **including their shoes** (shoes with velcro fastening would be ideal if your child can't do their own laces)
- Bring **one** labelled water bottle full of water
- **If it is your child's first day in our Pre-School**, please send your child with a set of spare clothes, a pack of wipes, a pair of wellies and a box of paper hankies, all clearly labelled, so that they can keep these in their labelled box under their pegs, ready for use.
- **If your child attended Pre-School during the autumn term** they will probably already have all of these things in school. If you can just make sure your child has a box of paper hankies, clearly labelled, so that they can keep this in their labelled box under their pegs, ready for use.
- If bringing a packed lunch – this should adhere to the packed lunch policy and children should only bring things they can open themselves. If they need cutlery for anything in their packed lunch, please make sure your child brings their own as they will not be able to use the school cutlery, given the current circumstances.
- If your child is staying for dinner, please pay for their meals via the Schoolcomms app. We are not going to accept cash.

All children must:

- Maintain social distancing walking to and from school and then between bubbles when in school
- All children will have to follow the Behaviour Policy – acting on instructions and not putting anyone at risk... clearly for Pre-School children this will be adapted as the children are so young and just learning to follow instructions.

As well as starting times, lunchtimes will be staggered. This is to ensure the bubbles are kept separate and to ensure children can either wash their hands or sanitise their hands before and after lunchtime. This is essential to help ensure the safety of everyone. Pre-School do not have break times; they will access this during the continuous provision. At lunchtime they will eat together in the Upper School Hall and will then

play in an area accessed only by them. Sadly, we are still not able to operate OPAL in its usual way but have purchased additional play equipment for every bubble, for their sole use.

During the day we will ensure a combination of hand washing and hand sanitising. This has been timetabled into the day for every class. We are also continuing with our cleaning regime so that after morning break and after lunchtime all toilets and handbasins throughout school will be cleaned again.

Unfortunately, parents will not be allowed in either building at any time, unless in the case of an emergency. If you need to contact school you will need to do so in the usual way – either by phone if you need to inform us of something that day, or if less urgent by email tanfieldlea@durhamlearning.net .

Illness within the bubble

The government are directing us to work in bubbles so that if anyone was to contract the virus this would reduce the number of people affected by this. If someone within the bubbles tests positive then we will seek advice from Public Health immediately, but it may mean that the children and staff within that bubble would not be able to attend school for a period of 10 days. During this time the children would have to resume remote learning. This would be managed in a similar way to what has happened during the current lockdown – you will be given a pack of activities for your child to work through. We feel this works best for children of this age.

Individual Isolation

In the case of an individual child having to isolate, remote learning will be provided through a pack similar to the packs Mrs Dunham has shared with you during the last lockdown. For more information re Remote Learning arrangements, please see our policy on the website.

Additional precautions being taken by staff

In addition to the precautions we will already have in place we have added two more layers of safety. Staff and any volunteers in school have been taking Lateral Flow Tests since the end of January. They take this twice a week and it is to help with identifying anyone who may be asymptomatic. I am pleased to report that no staff have tested positive in this period.

Following new government guidance, the recommendation is that masks still do not have to be worn in the classroom but should be worn by staff in the corridors, when moving around school. We will ensure this practice is in place from 8th March. The government has said this should happen up until the Easter break.

Childcare

It is our intention to continue to offer childcare at both the beginning and end of the day.

Breakfast Club runs in the Upper School Hall starting from 7:50. If you are new to this provision you have to contact the office first to ensure that there are spaces available as in the current circumstances places are reduced as the children sit in their bubbles at tables.

The booking details for CnS, who provide the after-school childcare, and the link to make a booking are on our website under the Parents tab/Childcare Provision. It runs from the end of the school day until 5:30.

With both provisions we will be asking parents only to use this if they have absolutely no other alternative.

Extended School Day for Catch-Up

We will be continuing with our Catch-Up plan on a Wednesday. This means that all children throughout the school have one extra hour of learning every Wednesday. We will resume this straight away on Wednesday 10th March so your child will come out of school at 4 p.m. every Wednesday.

Summer Holiday School

The press have made references to this a few times in the last couple of weeks. The government did make an announcement last week. They said that primary schools would receive £6000. If this is confirmed we will decide the best way to use this but we have no intention of running a summer school for our children during the summer holidays. The majority of children have worked hard through this lockdown. We have a term and a half to really work hard academically as well as giving children activities to support their emotional well-being. We firmly believe that by the summer the children will need time away from school playing together and hopefully having the opportunity to go on holiday.

Having said that, I am sure that CnS will be running a Sports Camp during the summer and they intend to offer this over the Easter holidays too.

We hope that the return to school will be sustained, the national picture will continue to improve and we'll have a good run now up until the summer holidays.

Once back I will forward you the 'Dates for your Diary' for the rest of the school year and the dates for the academic year 2021-2022. You never know, we might just be able to consider holidays then!

We look forward to welcoming our Pre-School children back to school from Monday 8th March as follows:

Bumblebees and Caterpillars

Monday 8th March

Arriving between 9:00 and 9:10

Ladybirds

Wednesday 10th March

Arriving at 12:45

Kind regards.
Kay Hemmings
Head Teacher