

21/05/2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

### **COVID-19 Update – letter 15**

There are a number of updates to provide within this letter and my apologies for the length but hopefully it will answer a number of questions and concerns that you might be having.

We are all continuing to face extraordinary challenges at this time and the situation is affecting all parts of society. Our staff have risen to the challenges created by the COVID 19 crisis and have dealt with the extraordinary circumstances with professionalism, resilience and remarkable dedication.

The main symptoms of coronavirus have been revised to reflect the new symptoms that are occurring. If your child or one of your family members has one of the symptoms below, please inform a member of the leadership team immediately.

- High temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- 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)
- 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

#### **Half term holidays**

We would like to confirm that unfortunately school will not be open to pupils during the half term holidays, due to the maintenance work and safety checks that are taking place throughout the week. This work was due to take place during the Easter holidays, but was postponed due to the lockdown measures in place for our contractors. We understand that this may cause further worry and stress to our families during these uncertain times, but we hope you appreciate our statutory duty to ensure that our school environment is safe and in full working order ready for term 6.

#### **Parent Survey**

Thank you to all parents/carers for completing the survey to confirm if you would like your child to return to school on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 if safe to do so. We are currently conducting individual risk assessments to ascertain if school is the most appropriate place for them to be.

We continue to recommend and encourage that those pupils with the most vulnerable medical conditions continue to socially distance. This means that they should remain at home if safe to do so.

We have received a letter from Matt Dunkley CBE, the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education. He has stated that:

*Quite naturally, there are concerns being voiced nationally and locally here in Kent about whether it is safe, or operationally feasible, for schools to begin admitting more pupils from 1st June as the Government has requested. I would stress that the Government has stated that the date to plan for readmitting additional pupils is 1st June, at the earliest. This caveat indicates that the Government will assess nearer this date if it believes the conditions are right to proceed from then, and we do not expect this final confirmation until 28th May, in all probability.*

In light of this new information we are planning to open our school on 1<sup>st</sup> June for our most vulnerable pupils and for those children of critical key workers only (Please note that the staff training day on 1<sup>st</sup> June has been cancelled). Once we have received further clarification from the Government on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020 we will be planning to gradually open the school to additional pupils in the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020 if we are able to proceed safely. You will be informed directly if a place is available from the 1st June and any restriction to this i.e. a specific number of days per week.

You do not have to send your child back to school if you would prefer them to remain at home, and you will not be penalised for this.

### **Home Learning**

Please continue the home learning being provided from your child's class teacher. If you would prefer not to receive work then please let us know as we are aware that this can cause additional pressure at home. If you require any additional support or any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school so that you can speak to your child's class teacher or Dept lead.

### **Free School Meal Vouchers**

These will continue to be provided and sent out on a weekly basis to those families who are entitled to them. Vouchers will be provided over the half term week.

### **Reports**

Primary reports will be distributed before half term representing progress until the end of term 4. Secondary reports will be sent out in term 6 representing progress until the end of term 4. We are also looking at being able to provide some further examples of progress through our new Evidence for learning system in term 6.

## **Annual Reviews**

Annual Reviews have not been taking place this term but with the extended period of partial closure we will be reviewing the arrangements for these in term 6 to ensure all the relevant paperwork is completed. We may require you to complete certain sections of the paperwork and join virtual meetings.

## **Revised arrangements and procedures that will be implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020**

### **Timetable and Class Groupings**

Your child will not be following their usual timetable and may be learning within a different classroom environment with a range of peers from other classes within their key stage. In order to limit class sizes, there will be a maximum of five pupils per class. We will continue to ensure that pupils are prepared and supported in the best possible way.

There will be no off-site visits taking place. Your child will have the opportunity to participate in hydro-therapy pool sessions in school. The class team supporting your child will inform you of the day this will be taking place.

### **Transport**

We are aware that there may be significant transport issues for home/school transport due to the requirements around social distancing. If your child receives transport via Kent County Council, this will continue for those pupils attending school. If you do not hear from your transport provider to make arrangements for term six, please contact transport's main switchboard on 03000 418484

### **Arrival to and departure from school**

#### **To reduce crowding at the beginning of the school day:**

- Primary students will start the school day at 9am and access the school building through the side gate nearest to the main field. Their school day will finish at 2pm to allow staff time to clean and washdown surfaces and resources.
- Secondary students will start the school day at 9.30am and access the school building through the side gate nearest to the life skills house. Their school day will finish at 2.30pm to allow staff time to clean and washdown surfaces and resources.

Students should remain in vehicles with parents/drivers/escorts until they are collected directly by a member of staff. Please remain in vehicles.

Staff will be available at both gates to take the temperature of students as they arrive.

Hand sanitising devices will also be available for students.

- Arrangements for Wouldham students will remain the same.
- Parents/carers and personnel from KCC transport must adhere to social distancing guidelines displayed around the school and leave the school premises as quickly as possible.

- All adults and pupils entering the school building must use the hand sanitiser provided.
- Except under exceptional circumstances, parents/carers should handover their child or young person at the two entrance gates and not come through reception.

### **Breaktime and Lunchtime Arrangements**

All pupils will have staggered break times and will go outside to their designated playground for breaks and maintain social distancing where possible.

All pupils will be eating their lunch in the lunch hall, but primary and secondary students will be separated by the dividing wall.

**Social Distancing throughout the school day – Although we are putting in place a number of measures to support social distancing, and have risk assessed the building, provided additional signage/PPE, we cannot maintain social distancing.**

We continue to follow the Government social distancing guidelines and will be encouraging our pupils to regularly wash their hands and follow the two-metre requirement and helping pupils to understand personal space where possible.

### **Transition planning and Class Lists**

We are aware that some parents/carers are concerned about transition arrangements for September. I would like to assure you that we will be reviewing the current situation in term 6 and making adequate arrangements for transitions to occur either in term 6 or within the new academic year. We hope to finalise new class lists within the next few weeks and will send this out once complete.

Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Scott Jarred – Headteacher