

Harleston C.E. Primary Academy

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Interim Headteacher: Mrs M Foreman

3rd July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

At long last we all have good news to celebrate with the wider opening of schools to all children from September. This means that we can start planning for every child to take up their place in their new class. The staff in school are just as delighted as you that we can return to some kind of normality.

The government has decided there is enough evidence that coronavirus has decreased since schools were limited to only having the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils at the end of March. With the NHS Test and Trace systems in place they think that they can give schools enough information to create and maintain safer environments in schools. Yesterday schools were issued with lots of guidance about what we have to do to implement these measures and as a result our risk assessments will be updated and changed accordingly.

So that we can manage the risks associated with the return of every child to school we will have to do some things differently when we reopen after the summer holiday. This will mean changes in classroom layouts as the first thing children will notice when they get into their classrooms. Children will be able to sit at desks in pairs, but all desks will face the front of the class and the teacher will be teaching from the front - a bit like a Victorian classroom! Children will be issued with their own set of resources such as pencils, crayons, scissors, glue sticks etc. There will be far less use of shared resources and when this happens they will be cleaned regularly.

A few examples of what will change include - we won't be having whole school assemblies, indoor P.E. lessons, and we won't be inviting parents to join children in class-based activities. The arrival and departure from school will be through the staggered system we have used since some children in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6 returned at the start of June. This means we will continue to operate a one way system around the school site and we will expect parents to leave the site as quickly as possible since children will go straight into their classrooms - even on the first morning back!

The guidance states that schools have to minimise contact and maintain distance as much as possible but recognises that social distancing is difficult for younger children. We will follow the advice that suggests broader bubbles of pupils so that we maintain distance between classes of children rather than individual pupils for these year groups - Nursery, Reception and Year 1.

There is distinct guidance about making different arrangements for breaks and lunchtimes so that there are fewer children mixing on the playgrounds and we will work out a way that we can manage this. Arrangements for eating lunch will also have to change and we will make decisions about how we manage this before the end of term.

The high standards for hygiene that we have had in place throughout the period since March will continue with additional cleaning taking place throughout the school day. Lots of handwashing and sanitising will continue.

Obviously we will continue to take all incidences of children feeling unwell very seriously. Just as happens now, they will be removed from class and taken to the isolation room and you will be contacted and asked to collect them as quickly as possible. If they display any of the symptoms recognised on our risk assessment as being signs of children being infected with Covid-19 - raised temperature, feeling sick, headache, aching limbs - you will be told to take your child to be tested and your child will not be allowed to return to school until you have either received a negative test

result or your child tests positive and must be isolated for 7 days. The new guidance states that if two children within a school test positive for Covid-19 in a ten day period, the school will be closed.

One thing that has not changed is that attendance at school will again be mandatory in September, whereas the return of children in June was optional. The government's statement on this says that 'the legal duty on you as a parent to send your child to school regularly will apply'. There is guidance about children who have been shielding because of health issues and if your child falls into this category you should contact Mr Richardson to discuss your child's return. Obviously, we will be very supportive of parents who will be fearful about their children returning to school and are happy to have conversations with anyone who is reluctant to send their child back to school.

Happily, all children will be back in school uniform in September - another sign that 'normal' school is returning. Once the office team has received your uniform order they will communicate with you about collection.

My next update will give you more information about how we will successfully start the Autumn term.

Having said in my previous update that I would try to look at a piece of work from every child who is completing home learning on Google classrooms, I am happy to tell you that I have made comments to nearly 100 children. I particularly loved looking at year 1 video's of their performances. I am sorry if I did not write a comment to every child who posted their learning, but I will try to catch up with more children next week - so keep submitting that work!!

Don't forget - we close for the end of summer term on Tuesday 21st of July and return to school on Monday 7th September.

Have a great weekend as the country relaxes the lockdown even more. Please make sure you and your whole family stay safe even while you enjoy the greater freedoms we are being granted. Please support the school (and the NHS) by still following the rules about staying 2 metres apart or 1 metre plus, two households are able to meet up and stay overnight, you can go to the cinema or have your hair cut, and of course can go to the pub!

With best regards,



Mary Foreman
Interim Headteacher