



Mrs. K. Dowdney B.Ed. Hons Primary
Head Teacher
Melton Drive,
New Hartley,
Northumberland
NE25 ORD

Happy children aiming high

Wednesday 19th August 2020

Tel: 0191 2371218

admin@newhartley.northumberland.sch.uk

Dear Parents and Carers

Once again I hope my letter finds you and your families fit and well and as always thank you all for your support and patience in these extremely testing times. This letter is a little earlier than originally expected so I hope will give you a bit more time to digest the many changes contained within it.

I am writing to you all today to share all the necessary information ahead of full school reopening on Wednesday 2nd September 2020. This letter is a little earlier than originally expected so I hope will give you a bit more time to digest the many changes contained within it.

I recognise that this letter is lengthy but it is vital that you read it thoroughly and adhere to all we have put in place to ensure school is as safe a place as possible as we move forward.

So, here goes:

Attendance

- Attendance is once again mandatory and will be recorded as previously.
- Being on time is very important due to the tight systems in place.

Times and dates

- School reopens to all children on Wednesday 2nd September.
- School starts for **ALL** children at 8:50am.
- School finishes for **ALL** children at 3:00pm. (Morning only Nursery children will finish at 11:50am and be taken to the main gate for collection)
- All term dates for the academic year are on the website and on the calendar on the app.

Entrance and exit to the school site

- We will be operating on a one way system for entrance and exit of the school site.
- Entrance to the site for **ALL** will be via the main gate by the turning circle.
- Exit from the site for **ALL** (at drop off and pick up) will be via the top pedestrian gate.
- The main gate will be unlocked at 8:45am and not before, even if the weather is bad.
- Both gates will be locked at 9:00am sharp.
- A new gate is being installed as the main gate at the front of school. This will have an intercom system attached to it which allows us to lock the gate making the site fully secure. Anyone trying to access the site (outside of drop off and pick up) will need to use the intercom system.
- At the end of the day you must leave the site promptly. Children will not be allowed to stay and play.
- Please be aware that if you have multiple drop offs/pick ups you must do these in the order which follows the one way system and cannot double back. Staff will keep children safely should there be any delays on pick up.

Individual class's entry and exit

- Classes **WILL NOT** line up on the yard as previously. They will enter and exit school at specific doors as follows:
- Nursery and Reception – Reception external door
- Year 1 – Main double doors to cloakroom
- Year 2 – External double doors into hall at the front of the school

- Year 3 – Year 3 external door
- Year 4 – Year 4 external door
- Only one parent/carer is permitted to drop off or pick up at any one time.
- Signs and staff will be in place to guide you. Class teachers will be at the doors to avoid any queuing and children will go straight in.
- Please note parents will not be allowed into the school building at drop off or pick up. We understand this will be difficult and for some emotional but we must enforce this for the safety of all.
- As is always the case and following our safeguarding policy we cannot allow a child to go home with another parent or carer without prior notice and permission from the child's parent.
- Year 4 children will only be permitted to walk home alone once the appropriate forms have been signed and returned to school.
- We will once again encourage children coming to school on bikes and scooters. Please be mindful that as children will need to go straight into school it would be your responsibility, as parent/carer, to put it into our bike shelter as you leave the site.

Uniform

- On return in September children will be expected to be back in full school uniform.
- Please **ensure all uniform is named** and encourage your child to be responsible with their belongings.
- The easiest way for you to purchase this is directly through Archers of Earsdon. - Website address - **archerssignsandgraphics.com**
- PE for **ALL** children will be on a Monday.
- To be as safe as possible, to negate the need for PE bags and to avoid children changing clothes we ask that **ALL** children come to school on Mondays in appropriate sportswear as lessons will be held outside only. This will begin on Monday 7th September.
- Correct PE kit will not be enforced during this period.

Break times

- Break times are staggered and using different areas of the school grounds to avoid classes mixing with other classes.

Lunchtimes

- **ALL** children will have lunch in their class spaces. The hall will not be utilised.
- School meals will be served to the children in their class spaces. Hot meals will be available but there will not be the usual choice or salad bar.
- Apart from cutlery and cups everything will be disposable.
- The menu is on the school app and the website.
- Packed lunches will be stored in individual class spaces.
- As much as possible children will need to be able to manage the items in their packed lunch independently. We will be encouraging healthy options from September, so for example please do not send in chocolate bars though a chocolate biscuit is fine etc.
- Each class has a designated lunchtime supervisor and play time is staggered.
- Please book for school meals **ONLY** via the app. You **DO NOT** need to indicate if your child is having a packed lunch.

Classroom set up

- As you are aware there are certain guidelines from government that we have had to follow when deciding on the best and safest way to set up classroom areas.
- Nursery and Reception will be one unit and has separate guidance to the rest of the school to allow for a more age appropriate learning environment.
- Year 1 will have two classroom spaces – one will be set up in an early learning format (structured play) and the other formalised at desks. This is due to the size of the cohort, the specific needs of children within the cohort and the fact that they missed a large portion of learning through play and therefore need access to this for the first term at least.

- Years 2 – 4 will be seated at desks side by side and facing forwards rather than face to face or side on. We will encourage children to adhere to social distancing measures where possible. Please note that this will be more difficult due to our very small setting.
- Year 2 will be taught in the hall in a designated and cordoned off class room space.

Read Write Inc. and reading books

- Children will continue to be taught phonics in their class groups.
- At this point in time it will not be feasible to run RWInc groups as previously. It would mean children from different classes mixing which we are not able to do. We will keep you posted on this as the year progresses.
- All children will be provided with a reading book which is changed regularly and must be in school every day without fail.

Curriculum

- Our initial focus will be on settling children back into school and the new routines and rules they must adhere to.
- Our SENDCO has provided all staff with a pack of resources around supporting children in their social, emotional and mental health.
- As always our approach will be very nurturing and we recognise that individuals may have very specific social and emotional issues, please rest assured we will be mindful of this in all we do.
- We recognise that as parents you will be worried about what your child has missed in terms of their education.
- Through conversation, observation and work produced we will very quickly be able to identify where children's learning may have regressed. We will then be able to take action, intervene and enable these children to close any gaps that have appeared due to lockdown.
- Don't presume all is lost, some children will have retained far more than you expected.
- In EYFS learning for Nursery children will be focused on the prime areas of learning including communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development. For Reception children it will focus on early reading and maths, ensuring acquisition of phonics knowledge and extending vocabulary. Both year groups will have access to outdoor learning as always.
- In KS1 and 2 focus will be re-teaching and embedding basic maths and English skills where needed.
- We will continue to attach all the children's learning experiences to our key theme of 'Aspirations' in the autumn term and ensure that the children are taught a wide range of subjects.
- We will be incorporating the coverage of the most important content missed in these subjects.
- Class teachers will be able to give greater detail as term progresses. Please note we will not be sending out our usual curriculum information for parents until approximately week 3 or 4.
- As stated in the government guidance the aim is to return to the school's normal curriculum by the summer term 2021.

Use of toilets

- Early years will only use the toilets in early years.
- All other classes will use the toilets in the cloakroom.
- Girl's toilets will be numbered as per classes (1-4) and can only be used by girls in the corresponding class number.
- Boy's toilets will have the two cubicles numbered 1/2 and 3/4 to be used by corresponding classes. Urinals will be for use by all.
- Children will not be stopped from going to the toilet at any time but please help us by reiterating to go during break times rather than in lessons.

Equipment use in school

- All children will have a named packet of their own resources. Play equipment for break times has been assigned to individual classes and is not shared across classes.

Equipment from home

- Children must only bring their coat (and any accessories as the weather changes), book bag with book and reading record, packed lunch (where needed), water bottle and in KS2 (years 3 and 4) a wrapped snack (if required).
- No other bags or back packs are allowed in school. Parents will be asked to take bags away if brought in.

General safety practices

- All children will be required to wash their hands on entry to the school, before and after break and snack, before and after lunch and at the end of the day before leaving.
- Hand sanitiser will also be in all class areas for regular use.
- There is a cleaning pack in each class to enable surfaces to be wiped regularly.
- Classes will be kept well ventilated at all times.
- All toilets will be wiped down at the end of lunchtime, in addition to their normal thorough clean.
- Children are not required to wear masks in school.
- It is staff choice if they wish to wear a mask but will have to wear one if they are dealing with an unwell child or a child requiring first aid.
- Parents are requested to lead by example and adhere to social distancing requirements whilst on the school site.
- If you wish to speak to any member of staff you **MUST** make an appointment via the app or by ringing the office.
- Nobody is permitted into the school building without a prior appointment.

Risk assessment

- We have carried out a thorough risk assessment that is in line with guidance from the local authority and government and in consultation with all staff and governors. This is reviewed and updated regularly and can be viewed on our website in the COVID section.

If a child becomes unwell

- It is of vital importance that school have the most up to date contact details. A new data collection sheet will be sent out by email this week. Please complete this and return it by email ASAP.
- If you require a paper copy please inform us via the app and we will send one home with your child.
- Any child presenting as unwell will be sent home regardless of their symptoms. (We are quite good at judging if it is necessary compared to trying to pull the wool!)
- If your child is displaying any symptoms please do not send them into school. If you are unsure then please call school.

NHS test and trace – response to infection

- The following is taken directly from gov.uk – Guidance for full opening –schools

Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process

Schools must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact their local [Public Health England health protection team](#). Schools must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:

- [book a test](#) if they or their child are displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
- provide details of anyone they or their child have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- [self-isolate](#) if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), or if anyone in their household develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS [testing and tracing for coronavirus website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

The government will ensure that it is as easy as possible to get a test through a wide range of routes that are locally accessible, fast and convenient. We will release more details on new testing avenues as and when they become available and will work with schools so they understand what the quickest and easiest way is to get a test. By the autumn term, all schools will be provided with a small number of home testing kits that they can give directly to parents/carers collecting a child who has developed symptoms at school, or staff who have developed symptoms at school, where they think providing one will significantly increase the likelihood of them getting tested. Advice will be provided alongside these kits. **(WE ARE CURRENTLY NOT IN RECEIPT OF ANY HOME KITS – they may arrive for starting back?)**

Schools should ask parents and staff to inform them immediately of the results of a test:

- if someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.
- if someone tests positive, they should follow the ['stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection'](#) and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

If schools have two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, they may have an outbreak, and must continue to work with their local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole site or year group. If schools are implementing controls from this list, addressing the risks they have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole school closure based on cases within the school will not generally be necessary, and should not be considered except on the advice of health protection teams.

In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, where an outbreak in a school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group, then the whole school if necessary, in line with routine public health outbreak control practice.

Let us hope that none of the above proves necessary at New Hartley First School.

Phew!!! I think everything is covered that is essential for our reopening of the whole school.

I am sure you will all have many questions and that other ideas/issues will come to our attention, along the way, as things are seen from different perspectives. I ask that you please bear with us and remember we are doing the very best we can.

As has always been the case we operate a completely open door policy and I am more than happy to discuss any concerns or issues you may have. This will be a testing time for us all and it is vitally important that home school relationships are strong and that we are open and honest with each other. We need each other more than ever to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children in our care.

Thank you as always for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you all on Wednesday 2nd September.

Stay safe and well

Mrs K Dowdney