

21<sup>st</sup> July 2020

### September Opening

Dear Parents and Carers,

By now, I'm sure that you will have heard the government announcement that schools will be open for all pupils from September 2020. From the very start of lockdown, we opened our doors to children whose parents were key workers from both Dame Janet and Newlands Primary. Our school has been welcoming more pupils in different year groups back to school since June. We approached this with great caution, reviewing all the scientific advice to ensure that we could be as safe as possible. This has gone extremely well, as our safety measures and risk assessments were excellent.

We are delighted that we can now look forward to seeing all our pupils back in September. We will be very busy in the next couple of weeks planning, finalising new and detailed risk assessments, and working out exactly what school will look like and feel like when your child returns.

We're working hard to consider how we group pupils together, ensure that we reduce contact between different groups of pupils, and keep the stringent cleaning and disinfecting processes we already have in place to ensure that our academies are as safe as can be for your child. In preparation, there are some key points that you need to be aware of to ensure that your child is safe. Please be aware some details may change; we will keep you updated.

1. Symptoms: You must ensure that if anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms, your child does not attend school. Any child or staff member who develops symptoms in the school day will be sent home immediately. If anyone in your household, or your child, tests positive for COVID-19 you must inform the school.
2. Travelling: The government has advised walking or cycling to school wherever possible to reduce the use of public transport.
3. Attendance at school: The government relaxed the rules on attendance during lockdown. However, this will change in September. The government guidance says: *'Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term'*.
4. Face coverings: Pupils and staff will not be wearing face coverings in school. The government advice is quite clear that this is not necessary. If face coverings are used on public transport to get to school, hands must be washed after removing the mask and the mask disposed of in a secure bin (if disposable) or stored in a sealed bag.
5. Hand hygiene: Your child will be expected to follow strict behaviour rules relating to physical contact with other pupils, and keeping their hands clean. Pupils will be asked to wash their hands regularly, and/or use hand sanitiser.
6. SEND: If your child has Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) please contact us if you need to seek further clarity about your child's provision.
7. Lunch: Our lower and upper school kitchens will re-open in September, and lunches will be available again. Pupils eligible for free school meals will return to having their lunch at school, and will no longer receive lunch vouchers.

8. Playtime safety: In order to minimise the risk of large groups of children mixing during break times, year groups will have designated areas to play.
9. Belongings: We will continue to provide stationery for your child to use during school. We continue to ask that no bags are brought to school during this time. Please apply sun cream before school and provide your child with a water bottle that can be refilled throughout the day.
10. Uniform: Pupils will be expected to wear school uniform.
11. Breakfast club: In order to not mix children from different year groups, breakfast club will not be operating for the first term. We will review procedures and staffing requirements to determine whether breakfast club will be able to reopen in term 2. Further information will follow closer to the time. We appreciate that this may cause some difficulty for parents/ carers but we need to ensure that the safety of the children and staff is a priority.
12. School mini-bus: The school mini-bus will also not be used during term 1 to collect children before school. We ask parents and carers of children who used this service to make other arrangements during this time. We will review this decision prior to term 2.

### Returning to school

We have two INSET (staff training days) on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> and Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Children in Years 1 to 6 will return to school on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Our new Year R and Nursery children will begin in the week of the 7<sup>th</sup> September (letters have been sent to home addresses with all details).

As Dame Janet already has a staggered system of entry (between 8.40am and 9.00am) and we are lucky to have multiple entrances, we will not be adding additional times for different year groups. Please use the yellow markings on the paths and playgrounds to continue to help your family understand the importance of social distancing during pick-up and drop-off times.

Nursery children and parents will use the main Nursery gate (found next to the main school gate on Newington Road). We are unable to operate a one-way system here, but have had a good system of social distancing in place during the lockdown period.

Year R, Year 1 and Year 2 will continue to enter the school through the Stirling Way entrance. You will then notice separate paths for Year 1 and Year 2 parents and children to ensure the route to classrooms is clear. All parents and carers will then follow the new one-way system, through the Year R outdoor area and out through the main school gate. The school day finishes at 3.00 pm for Year R, Year 1 and Year 2. Collection arrangements will be at the same location.

Year 3 and 4 pupils will enter the school through the Year 3 and 4 gate (found on Highfield Road). We will also operate a one way system where parents and carers leave the playground through the side gate (found at the back of the grass area) back on to Newington Road. The school day finishes at 3.10pm for Year 3 and Year 4. Collection arrangements will be at the same location.

Year 5 and 6 pupils will enter through the Year 5 and 6 gate (on Newington Road) and parents/ carers will exit through the staff car park to ensure a one-way system can be in place. The school day finishes at 3.10pm for Year 5 and Year 6. Collection arrangements will be at the same location.

We understand that some of you and your children will be anxious about returning in September, after many months out of school. Please be reassured that we are taking exceptional measures to make our school as safe as can be. We will be providing additional emotional and wellbeing support for any pupils that need it, and will also be providing additional opportunities to support learning where this is required. Although very many of our pupils have worked hard using our remote learning resources provided by our dedicated teachers, we are fully aware that learning has been lost. We're adapting our curriculum to make sure that the children get the learning and knowledge that they need to achieve success in the future.

Your children deserve a great, and safe education – we will not let them down.  
See you in September!

Yours faithfully,

Mr Atkinson