



Chestnuts Primary School

'Encourage, Enable, Empower'

Tel: 01908 373748

email: office@chestnuts.milton-keynes.sch.uk
www.chestnutsprimaryschool.co.uk

Headteacher: Miss Becky Skillings

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Katie Robins

Assistant Headteachers: Mrs Sam Sear & Mrs Nicola Tearle

1 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware, the government has given us notice that all pupils are to return to school on 8 March 2021. We have been busily fine-tuning our existing plans for how to do this safely, ensuring we are meeting the guidelines that we have been provided with by the Department for Education. These can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19>, if you would like further information.

The plan for Chestnuts full reopening is outlined below. It remains very similar to the September reopening in many ways, however there are some significant differences. If you have any questions or concerns, please do get in touch with us and we will happily discuss this further. Please accept my apologies for the length of the letter but I wanted to give you as much information as possible to reassure you that we are doing everything we can to keep your children safe.

Group sizes

We will ensure that children remain in year group bubbles at all times. For the vast majority of the time, children will only be mixing with the others in their class; however, there will be times, such as break, lunch, arrival and departure times, when they will be mixing as a year group. With 17 classes at Chestnuts, it is impossible to get all of the children into school, supervised at break and lunch without mixing as a year group. At no point will children in different year groups be mixing. We will not be holding physical whole school assemblies and, by staggering the start and finish times of the day, the opportunities to mix will be greatly minimised.

Start and finish times

We will continue with the staggered times that we had in place in the autumn term. It is absolutely essential that you arrive at the right time to prevent mixing.

Start of Day:

8.30 - 8.35 - EYFS and Year 2

8.40 - 8.45 - Year 1 and Year 3

8.45 - 8.50 - Year 6

8.50 - 8.55 - Year 4 and Year 5



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End of Day:

3.00 - 3.05 - EYFS and Year 2

3.10 - 3.15 - Year 1 and Year 3

3.20 - 3.25 - Year 4 and Year 5

3.25 - 3.30 - Year 6

Children in Meadow, Orchard and Blossom will arrive at 8.30am and leave at 3pm.

If you have 2 or more children, please arrive at the staff carpark.

If you only have one child attending Chestnuts, please use the gate on St George's Road.

If you have more than one child, please bring all children to the earliest time allocated to any of your children and then collect at the latest time. So, for example, if you have a child in EYFS and Year 6, please bring all children to school at 8.30am and collect all children at 3.25pm.

Please ensure that only one adult per family arrives to deliver or collect children to prevent unnecessary adults congregating at the gate. As we have previously done, we ask that all adults wear a mask near to the school gates to prevent the risk of transmission.

Staff will not be having conversations with parents at the gate and we request that you contact the school should you need to pass on a message. This is not aimed at preventing relationships, but instead is to keep us all safe.

Once you have collected your children, we respectfully ask you to leave the vicinity immediately and do not stop to let your children play or to chat with other parents. This is another way we can minimise the mixing of bubbles.

Lunches

Hot dinners **will** be served to all children who require them.

If your child does not have a school lunch, then they may bring a packed lunch with them; however, we ask that all lunches are packed in hard, plastic lunch boxes or disposable, paper bags. At the end of last term, we started to see a lot of fabric bags coming in with lunches. Please help keep us safe



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by ensuring any lunch boxes are plastic. This will then allow you to thoroughly clean the lunch box each evening, ensuring any transmission of the virus is minimised. Disposable paper bag lunches will be placed in the bin at school at the end of each lunch session.

Children will eat with the class and will not mix with children in other year groups at any point. They will also play in year groups with set resources which will not be shared with other groups. Children will not be able to play football, due to the risk of the ball leaving their zone and therefore being touched by children in other bubbles.

Hygiene and cleaning

All children and staff will be expected to wash their hands more frequently. This will include when they first arrive at school. In addition to this, each classroom has constant access to hand sanitiser throughout the day. We have made arrangements for the school to have more frequent cleaning of all areas throughout the day, including common touchpoints such as door handles, banisters and toilets as well as a thorough whole school clean each evening.

Uniform

All children must wear full school uniform. The only exceptions are the days that they have PE. These are listed below:

EYFS – Friday

Year 1 – Wednesday and Thursday

Year 2 – Monday and Friday

Year 3 – Tuesday and Thursday

Year 4 – Monday and Wednesday

Year 5 – Tuesday and Thursday

Year 6 – Tuesday and Wednesday

We will be having all classroom windows open at all times throughout the school day. Therefore, it can be quite cold in the classrooms on particularly chilly days. Do please send your child in with an additional fleece or jumper which they will be allowed to wear in class.

COVID Testing

Staff at Chestnuts will continue to take lateral flow tests twice a week to identify any staff who are asymptomatic.

No children in primary schools are being tested at school.



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The government has announced that they will be providing all family members of pupils at primary school with home testing kits, although the final details of this have not yet been confirmed.

Coronavirus Symptoms

Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms and will 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 or carers.

If someone tests negative, they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. 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 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school, only if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell/taste (anosmia). 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 after they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature at the end of the 10 days, they should continue to self-isolate until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 10 days.

Teaching and Learning

We will be teaching a full, broad and balanced curriculum with the addition of sessions relating to mental health and wellbeing to ensure that children are ready for learning.

Children will resume their Read Write Inc. lessons in EYFS, Years 1 and 2 but will only be mixing with other children from within their year group rather than across the phase.

Children in EYFS will have full access to all of the learning opportunities throughout both the indoor and outdoor classrooms.

In Key Stage 2, music and language specialist teachers will be joining the classes but will remain at the front of the class whilst teaching, 2 metres from pupils at all times. During these sessions, support will be provided by teaching assistants and class teachers.

All other classes will be taught in class groups at all times.

All children in Years 1 to 6 will be provided with their own personal set of resources to use each day (pencils, rubbers, scissors, rulers, etc). This will reduce the need for children to share resources.

Where resources are needed by several classes, these will all be cleaned thoroughly or stored for 72



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hours before being used by another class. In EYFS, the resources will be shared by all children for one day, and then cleaned and stored for 72 hours before being used again.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance for pupils returns to being mandatory from 8 March 2021. This means that, unless medical evidence is provided, all children need to return to school. We will resume the monitoring of attendance and request that all parents contact us should their child be unwell and unable to come to school. This can be done via email, telephone or ParentMail. We do anticipate having some children absent from school with coronavirus symptoms at times and request that you contact us as a matter of urgency should this occur.

Break times

We will be continuing with staggered break times throughout the morning. Children will be allocated a zone on the playground and the field that they may play in. These zones will be allocated to year groups and the children will be allowed to play freely.

Children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 will be provided with a fruit/veg snack for mid-morning by the government.

Those children in Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) may bring a healthy snack to eat during their morning play.

Possessions

The children will need to bring the following items into school with them daily:

Reading book - we will store these for 72 hours before issuing to another child

Reading record - we will stamp to say we have seen them and so we minimise the touching of the children's records

Water bottle - will only be touched by your child. Please ensure these are washed each evening.

Plastic lunch box - which can be given a thorough clean at home each evening, if not choosing the hot dinner option or providing lunch in a paper bag.

Please do not allow children to bring any toys to school.

Bikes and scooters may be ridden to school, although we ask that children wear a suitable cycle helmet.

Breakfast Club



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We will be continuing to operate our Breakfast Club. Children will be able to arrive between 8.00am and 8.05am each morning. They will need to be dropped off at St George's Road gate. Children will then go up to the front playground where they will line up in year group lines, avoiding mixing with other year groups. The children will then be taken to one of their year group classrooms. Whilst in the classroom, they will be provided with a dried breakfast (e.g. croissants, scotch pancakes, breakfast bars, fruit, yoghurt).

To ensure we have enough staff available to support the children in each year group it is essential that ALL children who require a place at breakfast club, book and pay for that place before the 11am deadline on the Friday before. Bookings will be available through the ParentMail App. Unfortunately, we will not be able to accept children that are not booked or paid for in advance.

Afterschool clubs

We will begin to run some after school clubs after Easter, although these will be limited to year groups to again avoid children from different year group bubbles mixing. Further information regarding the clubs on offer will be sent out to you all in due course via ParentMail.

Face coverings

The Department for Education continue to recommend that children do not wear face coverings in school. If children wish to wear a mask, then we will not prevent them from doing so. All staff (unless exempt) will be wearing masks around school but not generally in classrooms, although some staff may choose to do so.

Trips and Visitors

Unfortunately, the Department for Education guidance remains that school trips and visits, both day and residential, cannot happen at present.

Staff Adjustments

Due to the current government guidance, some staff are still unable to return to school at present. In the run up to Easter, some classes may be taught by their teacher remotely, with additional staff in the classroom to support the learning and provide help. In other classes, another member of teaching staff may be deployed. I will write to year groups separately who are impacted by these ongoing staff absences to enable you to prepare your children.

Return of equipment and home learning



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We would very much like to be able to reward the children and recognise their hard work at home and so ask that any work completed on paper or in their exercise book is returned to their class teacher on the first day back. If you borrowed equipment from school, please ensure this is also returned on 8 March, particularly any chrome books as these will be needed used in school as soon as they have been quarantined.

Remote Learning for those isolating

For any children who have to self isolate due to having symptoms, being identified as a close contact or who are advised by a medical professional to do so, we will provide remote learning for them from the first day of absence. This will take the form of joining the class remotely to receive the full teaching taking place in the classroom. Children will need access to a chrome book or laptop and these will be loaned if you need them. Further information relating to the remote learning will be sent to those who are isolating when needed.

Communication

If you have any further questions or concerns regarding the full reopening of school, then please do get in touch with us.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you and well done. Thank you for your ongoing support of Chestnuts and well done for the amazing things you have achieved with your children in these very unusual times. You have kept your children and the community safe, and achieved amazing things with your children through your ongoing support for home learning.

Take care, stay well and we look forward to seeing you all on 8 March 2021.

Yours faithfully,

Becky Skillings
Headteacher



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