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8th July 2020

Dear parents and carers,

**RE: Arrangements for the return of all pupils from September 2nd 2020.**

I would like to thank you all for your continued support during the last 3 months. We are really looking forward to welcoming all the children back in September.

It is the government’s plan that all pupils, in all year groups, will return to school full-time from the beginning of the autumn term. Returning to school is vital for children’s education and for their wellbeing. Time out of school is detrimental for children’s cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of learning and children’s future ability to learn, and therefore we need to ensure all pupils can return to school sooner rather than later.

We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone once again and I would like to reassure you that the safety of our school community is still our priority.

I am writing to share with you the arrangements we have implemented to reduce risk for staff, pupils and parents. These arrangements have been put into place following an updated risk assessment and are in line with guidance from the Department for Education.

We will continue to review the arrangements we have implemented and update you with any changes as and when we make them.

We recognise that some of you may have some concerns about your child returning to school and that, for some children, the return to school in September will be unsettling for them. We also understand that the past months will have been challenging for many families. It may be comforting for you to know that the children who have returned during the summer term (over 160 children) have all settled really well and are really happy to be back at school. Parents have been delighted with the provision and felt their child was in safe hands. However, if you do have any concerns, and would like to talk to us about your child, please contact the office.

**Maintaining a safe school environment**

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the preventative measures the school has put in place in order to minimise the spread of infection. As per the advice from the government, the following actions for infection control remain in place:

* Displaying coronavirus infection control measures information posters around the school;
* Encouraging good hygiene by promoting the importance of handwashing for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap in the following circumstances:
  + Before leaving home
  + On arrival at school
  + After using the toilet
  + After breaks and sporting activities
  + Before food preparation
  + Before eating any food, including snacks
  + Before leaving school
  + At regular intervals throughout the day;
* Ensuring pupils and staff understand that they must cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue away;
* Ensuring frequently touched objects and surfaces are cleaned and disinfected more regularly than usual;
* Calling NHS 111 if someone becomes unwell, isolating any unwell people in a separate room, and providing a separate bathroom, where possible;
* Telling staff to stay at home for seven days if they develop symptoms of coronavirus;
* Providing staff training on PPE, rubbish disposal, mental health and well-being;
* Engaging with the NHS Test and Trace process.

As an important part of our school community, I would ask that you continue to encourage good infection control practices, such as thorough handwashing, at home and keep your child informed about the things they can do to discourage the spread of infection.

In line with the current NHS and government advice, you should keep your child at home if they develop coronavirus symptoms for a period of seven days. Symptoms include a high temperature or a new, continuous cough. Where symptoms continue after seven days, or begin to worsen, you should call 111. If someone in your child’s household has symptoms, your child must self-isolate for 14 days from the day the other person’s symptoms started. This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear. More information regarding symptoms and actions can be found on the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>).

If you think your child may have been exposed to or has coronavirus, or if your child receives a positive test result for coronavirus, please contact the school on 01543 226070at the earliest opportunity.

**Reduction of contacts between those in (as much as possible)**

Staff and pupils will minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.

In specific circumstances, personal protective equipment (PPE) will be worn by staff. The majority of staff will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases, including:

* where an individual child or young person becomes ill with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms while at school, and only then if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained
* where a child or young person already has routine intimate care needs that involves the use of PPE, in which case the same PPE should continue to be used

In order to reduce contacts as much as possible, children will remain in class bubbles that will not mix so that, in the event of a positive case, it is easier to identify those who may need to self-isolate. In order to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, staff will operate across different classes where necessary, but they will try to ensure that social distancing is maintained.

We recognise that younger children and those with complex needs will not be able to maintain social distancing and accept that they do not need to distance within their group.

**Measures within the classroom**

***Classroom layout***

Adaptations have been made to the classroom to support distancing where possible. This includes seating pupils side by side and facing forwards, rather than face to face or side on, and include moving unnecessary furniture out of classrooms to make more space.

***Equipment and resources***

Equipment and resources are integral to education. For individual and very frequently used equipment, such as pencils and pens, staff and pupils will have their own items that are not shared. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the class group; these will be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces. Resources that are shared between classes or bubbles, such as sports, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between class groups, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different class groups.  **Please can children not bring in pencil cases or their own stationery.**

Outdoor playground equipment will be more frequently cleaned. This also applies to resources used inside and outside by Fulfen Club. It is still recommended that pupils limit the amount of equipment they bring into school each day, to essentials such as lunch boxes, hats, coats, books and mobile phones. Bags are allowed. Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to pupil education and development. Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation will apply to these resources.

***Measures elsewhere***

Groups will be kept apart, meaning that large gatherings will be avoided such as assemblies or collective worship with more than one group. Assemblies will take place in the classroom. Celebration assembly awards will continue to be recorded by Miss Davies and the videos will then be played in the classrooms.

Movement around the school site will be kept to a minimum. While passing briefly in the corridor or playground is low risk, Fulfen will work hard to avoid creating busy corridors, entrances and exits.

**Break times and lunch times**

Break times and lunch times will be staggered across the school to ensure that year groups are not mixing. Each class will be allocated a zone on the school grounds and children should bring suitable outdoor footwear to school. Each class will be allocated play equipment, which will be regularly cleaned.

**Snack will still be provided for the pupils who receive free school meals. We will be asking the rest of the school to bring in their own snack.**

Lunch will be eaten in the classrooms by all years except Nursery, Reception and Year 5, who will eat in the hall.

**Measures for arriving at and leaving school**

School doors will be open from 8.30am-8.55am to allow for pupils to be dropped off in a staggered way. Parents can decide themselves when the appropriate dropping off time will be. Pupils will then be collected at the end of the day at staggered time. However, where parents have a sibling, they will collect the pupils at the **LATER** time.

**Reception** – 3pm

**Year 1** – 3.20pm

**Year 2** – 3.30pm

**Year 3** – 3.10pm

**Year 4** – 3.20pm

**Year 5** – 3.20pm

**Year 6** – 3.30pm

**Nursery/Pre-school** 8:30-8:55am – 3.40-3:50pm

**Morning sessions**: 8:30-8:55am – 11:30-11:40am & **Afternoon sessions**: 12:30-12:40pm – 3:40-3:50pm

(Nursery and Pre-school have staggered drop off and pick up times due to the age of the children.)

**Physical Education**

All children will be expected to come dressed in Fulfen’ s smart PE kit on the days that they are timetabled for PE. PE days will be posted on the class page of the school website. This will remove the need for children to get changed in classrooms and therefore help to reduce transmission of the virus. Separate risk assessments have been written for Physical Education lessons.

**Expectations of Behaviour**

All Fulfen pupils are expected to adhere to the ***Be Ready, Be Safe, Be Respectful*** rules at all times. Children will be made aware of the following expectations and staff will support them in adhering to the following expectations:

* Enter and exit school via their specified door, keeping social distancing and following markings;
* Wash their hands with soap and water whenever asked throughout the day;
* Remain within their class groups at all times throughout the day;
* Use tissues or elbows to cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing;
* Children experiencing any symptoms must inform their adults, follow instructions for isolation and will be sent home;
* Children will have their own space in the classroom and will be reminded to keep all their equipment to themselves;
* Follow arrow systems around the school;
* Children will be guided to different zones of the playground for break and lunchtime;
* Behaviour will be dealt with in a pre-emptive fashion rather than a reactive manner;
* Any child who refuses to follow the rules (rather than any child who does not understand the rules) must be risk assessed and measures put in place to pre-empt any issues;
* Any child who, following risk assessment and associated actions, is unable to follow the guidelines will be referred to SLT;
* Pupils with additional needs will be given the appropriate support to ensure that they can follow the new procedures;
* Reasonable adjustments will be put in place for pupils who require them to ensure they can still access a broad and balanced curriculum.

**Attendance**

***Attendance expectations***

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the government made clear no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child’s non-attendance at school.

Now the circumstances have changed and it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise, as far as possible, the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children’s education, wellbeing and wider development.

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. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

* parents’ duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
* schools’ responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
* the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities’ codes of conduct

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, we will offer them access to remote education. The school will monitor engagement with this activity (as set out in the section below).

Where children are not attending school due to parents following clinical and/or public health advice, absence will not be penalised.

**Contingency Plan**

In the event that the government impose a local lockdown, or if certain year groups have to self-isolate, then we have a thorough contingency plan in place to enable us to revert to the use of Seesaw for comprehensive home-learning to take over with immediate effect for however many pupils this may concern.

**Wellbeing**

***Pupils and families who are anxious about return to school***

All other pupils must attend school. Fulfen will bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this. This may include pupils who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable, or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

Parents may wish to seek support for themselves from the following support agencies:

* Samaritans – call free 24 hours a day on 116 123
* National Domestic Abuse Helpline – call for free and confidential advice, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247
* Shelter provide free confidential information, support and legal advice on all housing and homelessness issues if you call 0330 0536 083 (please note, this is not a free phone number and your call will be charged). A free webchat is available at <https://england.shelter.org.uk/get_help/webchat>

**School Communication**

If you wish to communicate with the school, please can you email ([office@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@fulfen.staffs.sch.uk)) or phone the office (01543 226070). Parents will still not be allowed to access the school building. The office will be closed to visitors and parents.

We are providing a video to highlight further the procedure put in place for all pupils return to school in September. You can find the video on the school website under “information on September 2020” or by following this link: <http://www.fulfen.staffs.sch.uk/page/information-for-new-parentscarers--september-2020/70406>. We hope that this video will clarify points made in this letter.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you an enjoyable summer and look forward to seeing you all in September!

Yours sincerely,



Miss Davies