

It's Time to go back to school!

Friday 28th August

Dear Parents and Carers,

I wanted to write to you all to let you know the next exciting stage of our whole school return—all children will return to school on Thursday 3rd September for a 9 a.m. start. The local authority and all schools have been working incredibly hard over the summer to ensure school is as safe as possible so all children and staff can return to begin the new school year. In one of the documents I am attaching, from the Islington and Camden Health teams there is incredibly strong evidence that Islington is doing incredibly well during the pandemic—with cases less than 3.3. per 100,000 and that children are neither significantly affected by the disease nor key spreaders. Even though this is well evidenced we have meticulously planned to ensure the children and community are as safe as they can possibly be on their return and we are incredibly excited to be ready to welcome you all back!

Children will come into school on Thursday through their normal school entrances and there will not be a staggered start, but as children arrive there will be staff in the playground to guide the children immediately into class, we would then ask you to leave so we can keep everyone safe. We are re-opening the second gate in the Key Stage 2 playground to ease access at this time. At the end of the day we would ask you to collect your children as normal but immediately leave the playgrounds and avoid congregating in the park.

Each year group will in the autumn be in a 'bubble' except Reception and Nursery who will form a joint bubble, and we will ensure that each bubble is kept as separate as possible from each other year group bubble—at playtime, lunch time and any other time during the day. All assemblies will be virtual and class assemblies, which will also operate virtually, will not start until after half term.

Breakfast club will begin on Monday 7th September, but will have to be pre-booked online and all children will again be in separate zones in the hall to keep each year group bubble secure. We will run a limited number of clubs this autumn and they again will be run on a year group bubble basis, information about these will go out on Thursday. Any families attending after school stay and play provision with the Sunshine Club and Brickworks will have to book these directly with them, as they will only be offering limited provision. This is the same for the provision at the Cape through Awesome.

If a child or parent becomes ill at home, they will have to be tested for Covid-19 and receive a negative result before returning to school after a 48 hour period. If a child becomes unwell at school, they will be held safely in our medical space until they are collected and again must be tested and have a negative outcome before returning to school. This is exactly the same for any parent. If any child or staff member contracts the infection then the school will suspend the whole year group bubble for 14 days and start Google Classroom Home Learning for that year group. The year group will be able to return after a 14 day isolation period. For any case that occurs for a child or staff member we will closely liaise with the Islington Public Health team for guidance and support.

Lunches at Ashmount will continue as normal, with children choosing either a school meal or you can provide a packed lunch. The only difference will be that the children will have their lunches as a year group bubble, if the weather is good we will dine outside on the patio outside the main hall. Reception and nursery children will have their lunch in the small hall to enable greater social distancing.

With our school curriculum the focus will be on reading, writing and maths, music and the recovery curriculum from Year 2 upwards in Autumn 1. We will regularly review the impact for children with our focus being their wellbeing, learning together and successful return to school. Year 1, Reception and Nursery will continue with their hands on practical learning offer. We will announce PE days for all children next week, and on these days children will come to school in their PE kit. We expect all children to be in their full school uniform on their return to school.

After a long time away from school for many children we will focus on the children's wellbeing first and then on ensuring that we continue to offer a rich and vibrant learning offer so that each child reaches their full academic potential. We look forward to seeing you all again and I count on your continued support on this next phase of our school return and the year ahead.

These changes seem quite significant but we strongly feel that we are able to re-open as safely as we possibly can and that all children can now come back to school. We have risk assessed all elements of re-opening, had our risk assessments reviewed by Islington Council and have put in place an enhanced daily cleaning package of the building. In addition, we will for all children and staff ensure frequent handwashing and separation of Year group bubbles so that all of the school community are safe. Obviously there can never be zero risk, but it is now time to go back to school for all families and we look forward to ensuring all children are as safe as they can be when they return.

Best wishes and stay safe, Anthony Carmel (Headteacher)