

Giffards Primary School

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‘Valuing Everyone As Learners’

17th July 2020

EYFS Parent and Carers’ Information Sheet for September 2020 new starters

We have been working carefully to ensure that we balance the absolute need to follow the DfE’s guidance published on 2nd July and the vital importance to ensure that children have a positive experience when they start school in September. The need for safety must sit alongside a feeling of normality for our pupils. We have put stringent plans in place so all children can return to school. The information below details the arrangements we have made to keep pupils, staff and parents safe during this time. However, if the Government advice and guidance alters, these plans are subject to last minute changes. We will contact you before term starts if there are any updates or changes to this information.

Dates

We have made plans for a staggered start for our EYFS pupils starting in September, you should have **received another letter with these details on**. We have implemented staggered start and finish times for all year groups to alleviate some of the congestion at the school gates and to help with social distancing.

EYFS start and finish times

Pupils should be brought to the Children’s Entrance in KS1. Please do try and keep to these times to avoid any congestion on the gates. There will be a one way system for dropping off and collection. Please follow the signs, staff will be around to assist.

Only one adult should accompany a child onto the school site to avoid congestion.

Due to the current pandemic, we currently have a policy of no entry into the school buildings for parents but as this is the first time in school for many pupils and we know how important it is for you and your child to have a settled start to the day we are prepared to relax this rule for EYFS parents for the first three days (14th, 15th and 16th September)– **see separate letter**. Please do avoid bringing siblings into the school grounds unless absolutely vital, there will be no room in classes/school for buggies or prams. If entering the building these will need to remain outside. From **Monday 20th September** there will be no admittance into the school buildings/admin area for parents.

Staff will be on hand to support during these times. We know how difficult leaving your child at school can be, for you and them. Staff are prepared and willing to support by holding a child’s hand. Where this is the case we will sanitise hands before supporting with another pupil. Please bear with us, these additional precautions take time.

Could we please ask all parents to refrain from congregating outside the school due to the government guidelines around social distancing and to help keep our community safe.

- All pupils will be supervised in sanitising their hands before entering school. All adults will be required to do this also if coming inside.

Arrangements for EYFS provision from September

In order to comply with government guidance and keep our pupils safe we have added some additional protective measures to the EYFS provision in school. These are to keep our staff, pupils and community safe.

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Bubbles

In line with Government guidance, we are using the ‘bubble’ approach to keeping pupils and staff safe. Although children will be primarily taught in an EYFS class group, their ‘bubble’ will include all children and staff in their year group. This will support us in delivering a full and balanced Early Years curriculum that is still play based and allows for full use of all the indoor and outdoor resources. There will be full LSA support across the year group. The children will have breaks and lunch at the same time but will have no interaction with other year groups. Staff will remain within bubbles and we are minimising all movement around the school. Staggered timings ensure no year groups need to come into contact with each other. There will be no assemblies until further notice.

- There will be regular hand washing throughout the day with sanitiser and hand wash stations set up inside and outside. Children will be supervised in cleaning their hands before and after using resources/play equipment and the toilet.
- The children will be supported in understanding the importance of regular hand washing, not touching each other or their face and mouth
- All plastic/hard resources will be cleaned daily – and in between use by groups of children where possible
- Soft resources will be rotated over a 7 day period so they are ‘quarantined’ between use.
- Fun activities will be used to engage the pupils in cleanliness – such as the car wash – to clean the bikes in between use.
- The children will still be able to have full access to the outside area – in fact we encourage this.
- Children will still be able to interact with each other in a play based environment. We will encourage them to share and play together as this is how they learn best but will educate them in not touching each other and in washing their hands regularly to keep safe.
- Children will still sit on the carpet but we will increase the amount of tables in each room to help spread the children out more when using resources/working in groups
- We have enhanced cleaning regimes across the school. In EYFS the staff will ensure all tables, chairs, surfaces and resources are cleaned regularly throughout the day. Each room will receive a full clean mid-way through the day when the children are outside playing
- Lunch will be eaten in classrooms – we will not be using the dining halls. The EYFS staff will supervise and support pupils.
- Lunch will be provided in the form of a ‘grab bag’ provided by the kitchen. See attached menu. EYFS and KS1 lunches are fully funded but must be ordered. If you wish to send your child in with a packed lunch, this must be clearly labelled and in a sealed box/container. Children should be able to open all items independently, please avoid sending in yogurts/packets/drinks that need adult support
- The children will need a labelled water bottle – refilled daily at home, we will not be using the water coolers at this time. These will be freely available to pupils all day.
- The children will have a snack mid-morning. Strict hygiene measures will be in place. The snack is an important part of EYFS provision, we encourage good table manners and introduce the children to a variety of foods. The children will wash their hands before and after eating. There is a cost for this.

Collection at the end of the day

- At the end of the day pupils must be collected at the times detailed in the separate letter. Please do leave the premises as soon as you have collected your child to avoid congestion.
- Please ensure you keep your child with you, hold their hands if they have a tendency to run. We cannot allow children to be running around, there must be social distancing at all times.

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Below are the additional measure and requirements from September

Late pupils

We appreciate that many parents ensure their children arrive on time. Thank you!

- Gates will be locked 10 minutes after the last group has been admitted. If you arrive after this time you will need to use the buzzer on the main school gate, a member of the admin team will need to greet your child and escort them to class. This breaks our approach to bubbles and is a risk.
- We ask that parents are on time each day to drop off and collect to avoid this.

Breakfast Club

We are working hard to avoid year group bubbles mixing, for this reason there will be no breakfast club in September, we will review this once term starts and let you know if we feel we can safely open.

Extra curricular clubs/events/trips

Until advice changes we will not be holding any of the above, we believe at this time these pose unnecessary risks to pupils. The Government recognises it is logistically challenging for schools to offer clubs at this time. We will keep this area under review. In the meantime there will be **NO clubs** during the first half term at least.

Uniform

Child are to return to school in uniform. All uniform needs to be clearly labelled. There will be no lost property and parents will not be able to come into school looking for lost items.

The school office

The school office will be open for email or telephone calls, please do use these methods of communication to help us keep you and the staff safe. There will be no admittance to parents unless you have a pre booked appointment. From 9.15am the main gates will be by buzzer only. If you have a query, concern or message please contact us on 01375 672138 or at

admin@giffardsprimary.thurrock.sch.uk

To support parents in answering queries we will set up an outdoor admin' help desk' service, you will be able to spot the Gazebo by the main admin area in KS2. This will be open for answering queries from 8.40am-9.15am each morning.

Illness

Any child showing Covid-19 symptoms will be sent to the office immediately where they will be isolated until parents collect them, you will be given clear instructions where to collect your child from. Government guidance must be followed regarding self-isolation for that household and we ask that you seek a test to confirm the result. School must be notified immediately of the result.

If a case of coronavirus is confirmed within a bubble (class or year group) (adult or child) all those within the group will be sent home and all will be required to self-isolate for 14 days. The decision will be taken in conjunction with Public health Thurrock

Any adults showing any symptoms will be sent home, however mild, this is to protect the group as a whole. Replacement staff will be used to cover the bubble.

If there is a suspected case of coronavirus, a deep clean of the space will be undertaken.

We suggest parents check their child is well before coming to school each day, by working together we can protect our community and each other.

First Aid

We understand that accidents happen and children need medication if they fall ill. We will still continue to support parents in administering first aid and medication. Staff will wear PPE if a child needs first aid help. This is to protect your child as well as the staff.

If your child needs medication administering during the day you will need to complete a form – this can be completed at the 'gazebo help desk'. Pupils are not allowed to access the admin area at the moment – so first aid trained admin staff will go to each classroom to administer medicines. Staff will wear PPE and remain outside the room.

Attendance

The Government have said that, “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.” And that “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.”

If your child is not going to be attending school, Please telephone the school in the morning before school starts to let us know why they will be absent.

This means that our attendance expectations will be as they were prior to lockdown, with the additional requirement that if your child or anyone in your household shows any symptoms of COVID-19, they **SHOULD NOT** attend school and you must call the school to tell us.

P.E Kits

To avoid unnecessary close contact, such as helping pupils dress and undress, the children will not be changing into PE kits during the first half term so there is no need for them to have a PE kit in school yet. All activities will be undertaken in school uniform. The EYFS curriculum for physical activity will still be covered. We believe that changing for PE is an unnecessary risk at the moment.

Reading Books

Government guidance says that we are able to resume the use of reading books that are taken home by children to practise their reading; this also applies to spellings and phonics development. Please ensure that your child has a book bag or other suitable bag for taking home and returning their books.

Other resources and bringing things to school

The only items each child needs to bring to school each day are

- a filled water bottle – clearly labelled
- lunch box (if having a packed lunch
- school reading book and reading record

Children **should not** bring anything, other than items mentioned above, in to school. Please **do not** send your children in with birthday treats to share.

As it is crucial to our hygiene protocols that all pupils sanitise their hands before entering the premises, we’d like the children to put all items into a draw string bag (the PE kit bags are ideal) which should be worn on their backs, this ensures their hands are free for speedy and effective hand sanitising, these bags will hang on their coat pegs during the day. Please do not send in large ruck sacks or holdalls – if these are bought into school they will be removed to another place for storage. Please ensure your child/children have all their belongings with them when arriving/leaving school. it will not be possible for the office staff to distribute items such as lunch boxes and water bottles during the day, this bursts our bubbles and increases the risk of infection. We appreciate your support in this area. Please help us by being super organised!

Face masks

The guidance around this is rapidly changing. At the time of writing this letter and in line with the Government guidance we have received, face masks will not be worn by children or staff in school. Face masks will need to be removed at the gate before entering school and parents will need to take them home. The only exception will be for staff administering first aid or when dealing with an ill child that requires the staff member to be in close contact with them.

Curriculum

The full EYFS curriculum will be followed, we will ensure all learning builds on pupils starting points, where some pupils will have missed parts of their preschool learning due to the ‘lock down’ this will be taken into consideration. We will start your child’s learning journey from where they are. This individualised approach will support all the pupils in making a successful start to school.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and patience during these difficult times. We are sorry we have been unable to offer the same level of induction provision we would normally have. Because of the hard work of staff, we have been able to offer over 50% of our pupils some school provision since schools were asked to partially reopen. We

wish we could have had more. I want to take this opportunity to thank my staff for their hard work and support, they have been amazing!

We have worked hard to create a safe environment balanced with the importance of children returning to a school that offers them full access to an exciting, child centred EYFS curriculum. Please follow the guidance above and help us to provide schooling which is safe for all members of our community. We know some of these arrangements are not ideal but we have done our best to balance the many aspects of welcoming all the children back and follow the government guidance. There may well be some 'teething problems' during the first few days in September but I am sure these will not be problems that we can't overcome if we work together to give the best possible education to your children while being mindful of the restrictions placed upon us by COVID-19.

Thank you again, and I look forward to welcoming you to Giffards Primary School.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs N Haslam-Davis
Headteacher

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