

Dear Parents / Carers

We are really looking forward to welcoming all of our children back to school and have been working hard to ensure a range of measures have been re-instated to minimise risk and keep your children, the staff and wider school community, as safe as possible. An updated risk assessment has been written to capture all of this in more detail. We know it has been really challenging for families during this most recent lockdown and would like to thank you for all your support.

We are following the latest guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) and Reach2. All of the decisions are based on our professional judgement and experiences during this very difficult and challenging time.

[Schools coronavirus \(COVID-19\) operational guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90261/schools-coronavirus-guidance.pdf)

### **Essential Actions and Guidance for Parents and Carers**

We are currently in National Lockdown and it is important that families protect the wider school community by following the current government guidance. **Until March 29<sup>th</sup>, at the earliest, families are not allowed to mix, even outside, unless they are in a support or child-care bubble.** The majority of our staff have not been vaccinated so we ask that you help us to keep everyone safe so that we can continue to keep the school open for all of our pupils.

**We need everyone in the school community to comply with the protective measures, stated in the latest guidance:**

- Keep children (and adults) at home if they are ill
- Ensure robust hand and respiratory hygiene
- Engage actively with NHS Test and Trace
- Reduce contacts and maximise distancing (see more details below)

Additionally staff will:

- Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.
- Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

In specific circumstances we will:

- Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.
- Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.
- Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

### **Prepare your child for coming back to school**

- Talk through any worries your child might have about returning and reassure them that measures have been put in place to help keep them safe.
- Refer to the Same/Different Guide to help younger children understand the changes.
- Reassure them that their teacher will explain any changes so that they will know exactly what to do in different situations.
- Get school uniform ready and make sure they have everything they need
- Have a look at the resources on the school website, which support discussion about Coronavirus, these are located within the Wellbeing pages in our Home Learning section.
- Remind them that everything will be similar to last term.

### Learning 'bubbles'

During the Autumn Term the school was organised into learning 'bubbles' and this is going to continue for the new academic year. As much as possible children, staff and school will be organised into year group bubbles. This is because consistent groups reduce the risk of transmission by limiting the number of pupils and staff in contact with each other. **This approach recognises the fact that children, especially younger children, cannot socially distance from staff or from each other.** Maintaining distinct groups or 'bubbles' makes it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate.

In addition our children, particularly our older children, will be encouraged to maintain distance as the guidance has always recognised that: 'both the approaches of separating groups and maintaining distance are not 'all-or nothing' options, and will still bring benefits even if implemented partially'.

The guidance also makes it clear that staff in primary schools can work across groups if this is needed to enable a full educational offer. Staff are however advised to avoid close face to face contact and minimise time spent within 1 metre of anyone.

### Start and end of the school day

We will continue to use specific school entrances for different year groups of children and staggered drop off and pick-up times. The amount of time the children are being taught will not be reduced, as playtimes will be shortened if children are leaving a little earlier. We have modified the times slightly to help with movement through the grounds. We will monitor this very carefully and make adjustments if we need to.

| Children | Drop off      | Collection    | Where   |
|----------|---------------|---------------|---|
| EYFS     | 9am – 9.05am  | 2.55 – 3.05pm | The one way system will remain in operation. You will be expected to enter via the main playground gate, where there will be a staff member to help with directions. Children will be greeted within the EYFS area and parents will exit via the front of the school (ie not turn back on themselves). Please try and keep the main walkway clear for other parents to exit.  |
| Year 1   | 8.50 – 9am    | 2.50 – 2.55pm | The one way system will remain in operation. You will be expected to enter via the main playground gate, where there will be a staff member to help with directions. Children will be greeted near the door to their classroom and parents will exit via the front of the school (ie not turn back on themselves).  |
| Year 2   | 8.40 – 8.50am | 2.45 – 2.50pm |   |
| Year 3   | 8.40 – 8.50am | 2.45 – 2.55pm | The one-way system will remain in place with children entering through the side gate located nearest to the park (a member of staff will help with directions). Ideally the older children will walk across the playground on their own, but if parents would like to walk them to the year group entrance (particularly Year 3) you will need to follow the one way system and exit by a different gate (close to the main playground gate) as guided by a staff member. |
| Year 4   | 8.45 – 8.55am | 2.50 – 3.00pm |   |
| Year 5   | 8.40 – 8.50am | 2.55 – 3.00pm |   |
| Year 6   | 8.50 – 9am    | 3.00 – 3.05pm |   |

- Please arrive within your child's allocated arrival time slot to ease congestion.
- **Please do not arrive early.**
- If you have more than one child to drop off at different times please arrive at the later end of the earliest slot, e.g. 8.50am for children in Year 2 and EYFS.
- If you are running late you will need to contact the school office to make alternative drop off arrangements.
- Please follow the signs and adhere to the one way system, do not gather in the playground or at the school gates.

- Parents are responsible for maintaining the 1 metre + social distancing rule for themselves and their children at all times while entering, while on and while leaving the school premises.
- We ask that parents and carers wear face coverings on the school grounds, unless they are exempt.
- Staff will be present to ensure that these new arrangements run smoothly. Do approach staff on the playground but maintain social distancing (private and longer conversations are better via phone/email).
- Parents and carers must not enter the school building. Please keep 2m from external doors.
- Parents and carers should not try and pass on messages to staff in classrooms as this can cause congestion. Please email the school office or Year Group emails.
- If a child refuses to leave their parent's side we suggest that you sit out to one side or carry on through the one way system and try again when your child has had a chance to calm down.
- Only **one adult** may accompany each child onto the school site. We appreciate that you may need to bring siblings onto the school site; however, we encourage you to leave these children at home where appropriate supervision is possible.
- No dogs can be brought onto the school site or tied up near the school gate.
- No scooters or bikes can be used on the playground, or left in the cycle/scooter park area (to maintain the one-way system).
- Please leave straight away after drop off/pick up to avoid congestion on the playground, at the gates and on the paths near the school.

**Please be patient in the first few days after everyone's return as we will work hard to sort out any problems that may occur**

### **Prevention**

In order to minimise contact with individuals who are unwell, children must not come to school if:

- They are exhibiting any of the symptoms of coronavirus.
- A member of their household (including someone in their support bubble or childcare bubble) has symptoms
- They are required to quarantine having recently visited countries outside the Common Travel Area
- They have had a positive test

They must immediately cease to attend and not attend for at least 10 days from the day after:

- The start of their symptoms
- The test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive test, - whether this was a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) or Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test.

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with a new and persistent cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home and advised to follow '[Guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)' and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Other members of their household (including siblings and members of their support of childcare bubble) should self-isolate. If a member of the household starts to display symptoms while self-isolating they will need to restart the 10 day isolation period and book a test.

If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10 day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

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 01273 874050 or via the office email [office@eastbrook.w-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@eastbrook.w-sussex.sch.uk) at the earliest opportunity.

### **Face Coverings**

In primary schools the recommendation is that face coverings should be worn by staff and adult visitors in situations where social distancing between adults is not possible (e.g. when moving around in corridors and communal areas). **The use of face coverings is still not being recommended for children under the age of 12, we will continue to monitor the most up-to-date guidance from Public Health England.**

### **Hand and respiratory hygiene**

Coronavirus is an easy virus to kill when it is on skin. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser. Children will be expected to clean their hands thoroughly (20 seconds) more often than usual, including on arrival, when they change rooms and before and after eating. Younger children will be supported with this as it becomes part of their natural routine. Last term we found that our children became very good at doing this.

Bins with lids will be available to ensure children can dispose of tissues safely. The approach will be 'catch it, bin it, kill it'.

Pupils with additional needs will be supported as appropriate with these measures.

### **Cleaning**

The cleaning schedule will ensure that any spaces used by different groups are cleaned more frequently, toilets will be allocated to year groups and surfaces that are touched frequently will be cleaned more often than normal. Additionally guidance from Public Health England will be followed if there is a suspected case.

### **Ventilation**

Good ventilation reduces the concentration of the virus in the air. Windows will be opened to provide natural ventilation (in cooler weather windows will be opened just enough to provide constant background ventilation and opened more fully during breaks to purge the air in the space). Children should bring their school sweatshirt/cardigan to school even on warmer days as the weather can change quickly.

### **Testing**

All of our staff have been provided with Lateral Flow Tests and are able to test themselves twice a week to minimise the risk of someone who is asymptomatic coming into school. If a person tests positive they are required to follow this up with the 'normal' PCR test.

The government has also announced a new initiative to provide tests for parents and carers of school age children. These tests should now be available either from the parents' place of work, local test centres or via a new home ordering service. For additional guidance please refer to: [All households with children of school age to get 2 rapid COVID-19 tests per person per week - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/all-households-with-children-of-school-age-to-get-2-rapid-covid-19-tests-per-person-per-week)

### **NHS Test and Trace**

It is expected that anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus gets a test, including pupils. These can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/> or ordered by telephone via NHS119 for those without access to the internet.

### **A confirmed case of coronavirus**

If a member of staff or pupil tests positive for coronavirus we will contact the Department for Education helpline to gain advice from the local Health Protection Team. We will then inform parents of the actions that need to be followed, including details of who needs to isolate and for how long. This will be based on

who is considered to be a 'close contact'. Household members of those contacts who are asked to remain at home will not need to self-isolate unless the child who is self-isolating develops symptoms/tests positive. It is not expected that the whole school would need to close if there was a confirmed case but again the school would follow guidance from the South East health Protection Team.

### **Attendance**

The government has made it clear that they feel the benefits of children returning to school out-weigh the risk of children continuing to miss school. They have stated that:

#### ***School attendance will be mandatory for all pupils from 8<sup>th</sup> March.***

*This means the usual rules on school attendance apply, including:*

- *parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school (where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age)*
- *the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct*

We hope that we will be able to work with our families to ensure all of our children return to school, unless it is medically unsafe for them to do so. In the first instance please speak to the class teacher via the Year Group email. If you need any additional support, our family link worker – Mrs Thompson, will be available to talk to you and be contacted via the school office.

### **The School Office**

Current guidance means that parents will not be able to enter the school building without an appointment. The main entrance and front office will remain closed for general enquiries. Initial communication will need to be made via email [office@eastbrook.w-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@eastbrook.w-sussex.sch.uk). and telephone. We will endeavour to deal with all non-essential enquiries as soon as possible.

### **Additional Health and Safety Measures**

- There will be staggered break times for outdoor play. Whilst outside, the children will be with other children who are in their year group.
- Movement around the school will kept to a minimum. While passing briefly in the corridor is considered low risk, we will try to avoid creating busy corridors, entrances and exits.
- **Pupils will be asked to limit what they bring into school. Children in Years R, 1 and 2 will need to bring in their book bag, water bottle and lunch box (if they are having a packed lunch). Please do not allow your child to bring in toys from home. Children in Years 3-6 will need to bring a water bottle and packed lunch (if needed). Children in Years 5 and 6 may bring in their own pencil cases.**
- Basic resources will be allocated to children for individual use, such as pencils, pens and rubbers in KS1 and KS2.
- Any resources that will be passed from one learning bubble to another, will be cleaned between uses or left for 48 hours.
- Outdoor playground equipment will be cleaned more frequently.
- Minor first aid issues, for example your child grazes their knee at break time, will be dealt with by the teacher or teaching assistant assigned to your child's learning bubble.
- Any face coverings that children arrive wearing should be removed by the wearer and put in a plastic bag that the wearer has brought with them in order to take it home. The wearer must clean their hands.
- Use of communal play equipment and specialist spaces will be carefully timetabled. It may be that some rooms are only used by certain children or year groups and additional cleaning may be required.
- As a school, we are expecting to be able to maintain a consistent supply of soap and hand sanitisers so you do not need to provide any for your child. However, if your child does bring in their own small bottle, we ask that it is clearly labelled as it will be kept in a central place in the classroom.

### **Curriculum**

The school will continue to deliver a broad curriculum although there is some flexibility to create time to cover the essentials (phonic and reading, increasing vocabulary, writing and mathematics). Extra guidance will be followed for subjects like PE and music. Staff will continue to follow a 'recovery curriculum' based on the educational needs of the children in their year group. Formative assessment (such as quizzes, observing pupils in class, talking to pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work) will be used to inform this planning. At the same time remote education will continue to be developed in case of a local lockdown or a need for a child, or group of children, to self-isolate. Well-being, particularly the rebuilding of relationships will be a priority.

### **Wider Curriculum**

- At the current time the guidance states that we must still avoid large gatherings such as assemblies or collective worship.
- We will share more information about what clubs (other than Breakfast and the main After School Club) we are able to offer (or not) at the start of the Summer term.
- No educational visits are recommended at this point in time.
- We will look at how Forest School can be run within the guidelines and will inform individual classes ahead of their sessions.
- We are looking to resume swimming for the Summer Term if we can put enough safety measures in place.

### **Staff**

Staff are allowed to move between 'bubbles' in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable, although we will try to minimise this.

### **Volunteers and Visitors**

The DfE states that 'Volunteers may be used to support the work of the school, as would usually be the case. It is important that they are properly supported and given appropriate roles. Mixing of volunteers across groups will be kept to a minimum and they should remain 2 metres from pupils and staff where possible. Similar guidance is expected to be followed with visitors to the school.

### **Pupil well-being and support**

We understand that pupils may be experiencing a range of emotions in response to the coronavirus outbreak, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. As part of the recovery curriculum, activities will be provided to:

- Support the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
- Address and equip pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus
- Support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Additional support will be available from our school nurse and our family link worker.

### **Behaviour**

Normal expectations for pupil behaviour will continue to apply. If a child's behaviour places themselves, other children or a staff member at risk (for example deliberately breaching age-appropriate social distancing or hygiene instructions) parents will be contacted to help the staff support their child.

### **Uniform**

All children should wear their normal school uniform. Government advice is that uniforms do not need to be cleaned more often than usual. If your child sometimes needs a change of clothing, following a toileting incident, we ask that you provide them with a change of clothing which we can keep in school. On days that

your child has PE they will be asked to wear their PE kit to school to avoid multiple use of the changing rooms and/or assistance getting changed. Children should have a school jumper/cardigan so that classroom windows can be left open to improve ventilation. They should also bring a coat to ensure they can go outside at playtimes. If anyone has difficulty obtaining items of school uniform please ensure you inform the school office so that we are aware of the circumstances.

### **Water Bottles and Lunch**

Lunch times will continue to be staggered to reduce the number of pupils in the dining hall at any one time. The main hall will also be used for year groups to have lunch together. All children will be able to order a school dinner as normal.

It is essential that your child brings their own, named water bottle to school each day. Children may only bring water to drink.

### **Sun Safety**

If it is a sunny day, please ensure that your child has been protected with sun cream before they arrive in school and that they have a sun hat with them as they may spend a longer amount of time outside than usual on some days.

### **Subject to Change**

Hopefully you can see a huge amount of time and thought has already gone into establishing an updated plan for the wider opening of our school. These plans are subject to change at any time depending on new government guidance and of course what happens over the coming weeks in England in terms of the Covid pandemic.

As always, please be in touch if there is anything that we need to know or you would like support with. The Year Group emails will remain in use to communicate with year group staff but they will not be checked as regularly as more face-to-face teaching will be occurring. If you have an urgent enquiry please contact the school office [office@eastbrook.w-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@eastbrook.w-sussex.sch.uk) and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Thank you for your continued support.



Julia Sherlock  
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