



Downside Primary School

Chaul End Lane, Luton,
Bedfordshire LU4 8EZ

T: 01582 587160

E: dpsadmin@downside-primary.co.uk

W: www.downside-primary.co.uk

Headteacher: Miss Karen Hooker

13th July 2020

Dear parents,

It feels like it has been a very strange end of term this year – no sports days, no Leavers' Assembly and no end of term celebrations. However, it does feel like an achievement to be getting to the summer holidays! As a reminder, school finished tomorrow (Thursday 16th July).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my team who have worked really hard and adapted to a completely new way of teaching. We have had staff on site every day, including the Easter holidays, to support childcare and I think many teachers got very fit during lockdown delivering packs of work!

We have welcomed back just under 200 children since 1st June and the children and team have taken all the many changes in rules and regulations in their stride to ensure everyone has kept safe. It has been lovely to see other children coming back for the transition events as well.

As is always the case at the end of a term, we will be saying goodbye to some members of our team. Mr McKeever will be moving abroad to teach and Miss Hoque will be moving to a school closer to her new home in London. I am sure you will join me in wishing them both well in their new homes and schools.

In September, we will be welcoming:

Miss Smith – Reception teacher
Mrs Keane – Year 2, working alongside Mrs Ball
Mrs Chowdhury – Year 4 teacher

Attendance

School restarts on Wednesday 2nd September

As parents are aware, all children are expected to attend every day from September, unless they are unwell.

I understand some parents may be nervous about a return to school, but I have worked hard to ensure our school is as safe as possible for the return in September. If you have concerns about your child returning, the Family Workers and Learning and Wellbeing mentors will be on hand in September to support your child.



Plans for September

As the country starts to regain some sense of a new normal, so must schools. I have been working hard on a plan to ensure all children are back at school and are as protected as is possible in the Autumn term. Please read this letter carefully, as there are a number of changes.

Before children come to school:

- Parents should not send their children in to school unless they are well. Please be extra cautious!
- One adult should do the drop off and leave their child at the main gates – a staff member will be at the gates.
- If children walk alone, parents should ensure their children come directly to school and don't stop at the local shops etc.
- Parents should follow all the Government guidelines and not allow their child to mix with other children / adults on the way to school

Masks

Current guidance suggests that should children come in to school wearing a mask then this should be taken off for school. If the mask is a disposable one, this will be disposed of in the lidded bin in the classroom. If the mask is reusable, then children will be asked to put this into their bags – ideally in a plastic bag.

Classes and year groups

The Government have acknowledged that in order to get all children back to school, children now need to move from small bubbles to class / year group bubbles. Classrooms are not big enough to socially distance children from each other, but we will be taking the following measures:

- Regular hand washing / using hand sanitiser, which we have in school (on entry, before/after break and lunch or any activities where it is felt necessary)
- Regular cleaning (areas and equipment)
- Children will have their own frequently used equipment
- Desks will be separated and forward facing, as much as is possible

Classes will be kept together and will only mix with children from their year group at planned times:

- Breaktimes – as there is a lower risk of transmission, as children are outside
- Lunchtime – in the dinner hall and outside.

We will not be mixing classes, except for in Year 6 – where we will mix them in order to tailor our curriculum to the children's abilities. In these cases, children will sit with their classmates and will be expected to socially distance themselves as much as possible.

New school timings:

As you are all aware, the start and end of the school is very busy at our school. The Government have asked that schools therefore stagger start and end times.

Start times:

	Time		Register	Lessons start
Year R	8.45 – 8.55	Reception entrance	8.55	9.00
Year 1	8.35 – 8.45	Reception entrance	8.45	8.50
Year 2	8.35 – 8.45	Main entrance	8.45	8.50
Year 3	8.35 – 8.45	Reception entrance	8.45	8.50
Year 4	8.45 – 8.55	Main entrance – through car park	8.55	9.00

Year 5	8.45 – 8.55	Main entrance – through car park	8.55	9.00
Year 6	8.35 – 8.45	Main entrance – through car park	8.45	8.50

Lunchtime:

Lunchtime has been a challenge to organise - so that year groups are kept apart. The changes mean:

- Some classes will be on a rota – eating in the hall and their classroom.
- Lunchtime is no longer an hour and has reduced to 50 minutes in Years R,1,2,5,6 and 45 minutes in Years 3 and 4.
- In September, school dinners will be cold, apart from pizza on a Friday. Once we have the children back and have checked everything works, we will endeavour to provide a hot meal as we move in to the winter. A menu is attached.
- As much as possible, the team do not wish to handle cash, so please pay online if at all possible. If not, dinner money should be put in an envelope and put in the letterbox, outside the main entrance. Money should not be sent to class with children.

For those parents who take children home at lunchtime, the new times are:

Reception	11.45 – 12.35	Year 4	12.15 – 1.00
Year 1	12.00 – 12.50	Year 5	12.30 – 1.20
Year 2	12.40 – 1.30	Year 6	12.45 – 1.35
Year 3	12.00 – 12.45		

End times:

The final challenge is getting all the children home safely, whilst keeping children /adults etc apart!

Due to some classes starting earlier and the shorter lunchtimes the end times have also changed. Please rest assured that the children still get exactly the same amount of teaching time in the classroom.

Parents will need to come on to site to collect children and so please be aware of where to collect your child from. Siblings will not be allowed to walk through the school to go to their sibling's classes; parents will need to arrange to meet their children somewhere or collect them from their collection point – the staggers should help this.

As we have not been able to do any transitions, we will have signs and staff available to help you get to where you need to on the first day!

	End time	How?
Reception	3.20pm	<p>Parents enter through the Reception gates, where children are dropped off.</p> <p><u>Emerald and Crystal</u> from the classroom in school. <u>Coral, Opal and Ruby</u> - Reception playground</p>
Year 1	3.10pm	<p>Parents enter through the Reception gates, where children are dropped off.</p> <p>Collect: <u>Elm</u> from outside the classroom <u>Willow, Oak, Ash</u> from the KS1 playground <u>Beech</u> from outside the classroom, which is on the KS1 playground</p>

Year 2	3.10pm	Saturn and Jupiter only - Parents enter through the Reception gate and collect from the class doors on the Key Stage 1 playground Mars, Mercury and Venus – Parents enter through the main school gates and turn right to go down the ramp / stairs to the Year 2 classrooms.
Year 3	3.05pm	Parents enter through the main entrance and collect from KS2 playground
Year 4	3.15pm	Walk / parents collect KS2 playground
Year 5	3.20pm	Walk / parents collect KS2 playground
Year 6	3.10pm	Walk / parents collect KS2 playground

To help parents, I have put a summary of all timings on the back page of this letter.

School uniform:

All children should return to school wearing school uniform – as normal, including school shoes.

PE kit:

To avoid disruption with changing, children may wear their PE kit on PE days.

PE kit is as follows:

- White school t shirt / polo shirt
- Black or grey shorts / tracksuit bottoms / leggings
- School jumper
- Trainers

Children will not have PE in their first week back – children will be told when their PE slots are during this week.

School bags:

We need to minimise the equipment moving between home and school. Ideally, children should just bring in their reading book, lunch (if they are packed lunch) and a water bottle in a small bag (like their book bag).

I hope the above gives you the key information about the return to school. Should anything change, I will let you know!

I will write in September about all the other changes, including what to do if your child has symptoms and the other adaptations we have had to make to keep the team, yourselves and your children safe.

In the meantime, please keep safe and have a great summer break – I hope the sun shines for us all!

Yours sincerely,