

1st September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your family enjoyed a safe summer. You may recall me writing to you before the summer break; I want to take the opportunity to remind you again of the arrangements we have in place to ensure a safe return of all pupils over the coming days.

Our amazing staff have been working hard to make sure we can provide a high quality, broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils in our brand-new school building. In order to follow government guidelines, the delivery of our curriculum will look very different to what 'normal' was, ensuring that the health and safety of pupils and our staff is assured. Before the summer break we compiled our 'Bishop Barrington COVID-19 information pack', which was designed to provide you with an overview of all you need to be aware of ahead of the full return of all pupils in September. The pack included information on:

- The phased start to autumn term
- Adjustments and expectations regarding transport to and from school
- Adjustments to our expectations regarding: Uniform, Behaviour, Equipment, Attendance (where your child's timetables states that they have a PE lesson in the Sports Hall, they will be required to come to school wearing their PE kit - changing room facilities will only be accessed if PE kit is heavily soiled). Pupils must bring their own equipment (pen, pencil, ruler, a calculator if possible, a face mask and a bag).
- A summary explanation of our procedure if a child develops COVID symptoms in school
- Arrangements for parents accessing school - visits to the school must be by appointment only.
- A summary of our contingency plan for if there is a partial or full school closure (to be reviewed in light of the government's new 'tiered approach' - please continue to check our website or Facebook page for any updates)
- Adjustments to start times, break times, lunches, end of day for year group bubbles (please see timings of start and of end of day in this letter)
- Adjustments to lunch provision (and breakfast) - in the short term we encourage pupils to bring in their own packed lunch and their own water bottle where possible. Due to COVID restrictions, the water machines in school will not be accessible, but water top-ups will be provided at lunchtimes by lunchtime supervisory staff. Where pupils bring their own packed lunch boxes and water bottles, we advise that these are washed at home thoroughly at the end of each day. Pupils will take turns, on a weekly rota, to access our bistro and outside areas during their lunchtime, whilst other pupils will eat their lunch in their zoned area (lunches that have been ordered will be delivered to pupils in their zoned area). For example, in 'red week' Y7s may use the bistro and outside areas, whilst Year 8 have lunch in their zone, in blue week this will swap over.
- A summary of our plan for pupil support

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Acting Headteacher: Nathan Powell



In addition to this information pack, we have also (including very recently) posted updates on our Facebook page and website. The updates include a fact sheet with details about pupils wearing face coverings in school, as well important transport information.

We thank you in anticipation for your support as your child returns to school over the coming days. Following government guidelines means that we still can't operate our school day in the way we do in 'normal times'. We can assure you that your child won't miss out on the quality of education but their experience on how it is provided to them, will feel very different.

Over the next couple of weeks, teachers will spend a significant amount of time ensuring pupils successfully 're-connect' with school. Gaps in learning will be addressed in order so that pupils can continue to successfully progress through the curriculum and, for Year 11 pupils, successfully prepare for their summer 2021 exams.

As part of this reconnection and induction into our brand-new school building, we will be welcoming pupils in 4 separate phased stages. In each stage, pupils will spend the day familiarising themselves with the new school building, their new timetable and the new routines we have in place.

The 4 phased stages of return of pupils:

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Friday 4th September - Y7 induction morning - pupils in Year 7 only

- 8.30am start - 12.30pm finish

Monday 7th September - pupils in Years 10 and 11 only (Years 7, 8 and 9 to remain at home):

- Year 10 - 8.30am start (from Wednesday 9th, start time will be 9.00am), 2.40pm finish
- Year 11 - 9.30am start (from Wednesday 9th, start time will be 9.10am), 2.50pm finish

Tuesday 8th September - pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 only (Years 10 and 11 remain at home)

- Year 7 - 8.30am start (from Wednesday 9th, start time will be 8.30am), 2.10pm finish
- Year 8 - 9.30am start (from Wednesday 9th, start time will be 8.40am), 2.20pm finish
- Year 9 - 10.30am start (from Wednesday 9th, start time will be 8.50am), 2.30pm finish

Wednesday 9th September onwards - all pupils return to school

Please take note of the new staggered, daily start times for each year group from Wednesday 9th September. It is vital that pupils arrive on time, in order to ensure year bubbles are maintained right from the start of the day and throughout.

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As you can see there are also staggered exit times. Unless waiting to get onto their transport, pupils must not wait around for friends at the main gate, but rather, make their way straight home. In instances where transport arrangements mean that pupils may not be able to arrive at, or exit from school in their year bubbles, we will make appropriate provision in school where pupils can wait in zoned areas.

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In school, we will expect all pupils to follow a COVID code of conduct to ensure safety of themselves and others. These include some of the following expectations, which we encourage families to adopt at home:

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds regularly – it's one of the best ways to protect yourself and encourage your children too
- Using hand sanitiser (at least 60% alcohol) if soap and water aren't available
- Staying 2m apart where possible or 1m with additional measures such as, wearing a face covering (in communal areas of school only - unless exempt), not talking face-to-face.
- Trying not to touch your face (mouth, nose, eyes) with your hands
- Using a tissue if you cough or sneeze, then bin it and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue use the crook of your arm. Catch it, Bin it, Kill it!

We know that there still may be some confusion around Coronavirus so we thought the following points might be helpful:

What are the main symptoms?

- A temperature
- A new and persistent cough
- Loss of sense of taste or smell

What should you do if you have symptoms?

- Self-isolate immediately
- Get tested – you must do this within the first five days of having symptoms

How do I get tested?

- You can book a test online at <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>
- Or you can call 119 and book over the phone

What is self-isolation?

If you are self-isolating because you have symptoms/have been diagnosed, someone in your household or support bubble has symptoms/has been diagnosed or you have been asked to by the NHS Test & Trace team, then you should stay at home.

- Don't go out to work / school / public places (if you can work from home that is ok)
- Don't go shopping even for food/medicine
- Don't use public transport or taxis
- Don't have visitors
- Don't go out to exercise (you can do this in your home or garden)

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The County Durham Together Community Hub is there to help you with everything from getting food or medication as well as advice about managing financially and ways to continue looking after your physical and mental health while in isolation. You can find out more details here: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help>

Following these simple steps will help stop the spread of Coronavirus. Remember your symptoms can be mild, so you could be spreading the virus without knowing it. You have the power to help keep your family, friends and loved ones safe.

Again, we're extremely grateful for your anticipated support and indeed for all of the support we've received so far from the school community. We look forward to welcoming your child back to school, back into the classroom, enjoying their education again whilst in a brand new school building.

Take care.

Kind regards,

Nathan Powell

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