



St Patrick's RC Primary School, Dipton

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Headteacher: Mrs J Burgess

We follow in Christ's footsteps

Tuesday 2nd March 2021

Dear Pupils, Parents and Carers

Hang on in there! After the prime minister's announcement last week, our school family should be reunited from 8th March. I am sure for many of you it will not be a moment too soon!

I would like to reiterate my thanks to you all for trying to make the best of a challenging situation. Thank you, pupils and parents, for your fantastic attempts to immerse yourselves in home learning – which really cranked up a significant notch this lockdown. We appreciate all your efforts to complete a range of different activities, from grappling with White Rose maths and Oak Academy to checking in and learning 'live' with your teachers. It's been full-on!

I would like to offer a sincere thanks to all the staff: teaching, office, lunchtime and cleaning staff, who have worked tirelessly to keep school open throughout the pandemic - maintaining their usual energy and enthusiasm. School life and teaching have been very different for us too!

Thank you to governors who, as ever, work voluntarily behind the scenes, to support and challenge, ensuring our school is safe and well prepared for all eventualities!

As you know, we have been here before, managing the wider re-opening of school after a national lockdown. We thought, therefore, it would be helpful to reissue an updated set of protocols and expectations (previously sent in July '20). Unfortunately, Covid-19 remains a serious risk and all necessary precautions need to remain in place until further notice.

Apologies in advance: these letters always prove very lengthy, but I feel it is always best to share as much information as possible so that everyone feels fully informed.

As always, our intention is to maintain honest and open lines of communication with you with an appreciation that the situation may change, potentially at short notice, if new guidance is issued. We will keep in regular contact with you and let you know when it is possible to ease these continued restrictions. Our next review will be around Easter time. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school office, via phone or email:

diptonstpatricks@durhamlearning.net

Please continue to stay safe and look after each other. We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone soon!

Kindest regards

Mrs J Burgess
Headteacher

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The main areas to be aware of include:

Behaviour

- ✓ We hope all our pupils will be delighted to be in school but we realise it will be important to spend time settling children back into a routine. A big part of this will be revisiting expectations regarding behaviour towards adults and each other. We want this return to be as positive as possible, but we know it will involve a big adjustment for some. We want all classes to operate calmly and productively.
- ✓ After our last re-opening, we were contacted by some parents regarding the seating arrangements of pupils, with requests that pupils sit next to specific friends etc. We see all our year groups as a unit and promote friendships and tolerance amongst everyone in the class. We cannot therefore base seating arrangements on parental or pupil preference. The teacher will be responsible for class organisation.

School work

- ✓ Staff will spend the weeks leading up to Easter gently and supportively assessing pupils to establish where they are in their learning. This will provide an accurate starting point for each individual child to continue his/her learning journey at an appropriate pace. This gives us all a chance to reset. With this in mind, we will not be offering a parents' meeting before Easter. We will schedule remote parents' meetings during the weeks beginning 19th and 26th April. If you feel the need to talk to your child's class teacher, we will offer a Teams/phone conversation (details to follow).
- ✓ If a pupil contact group (bubble) or an individual pupil has to self-isolate, our home learning offer will resume as appropriate – all details are on the school website.

Social distancing

- ✓ This remains an important aspect of school life and will impact arrival, departure and how children move around school.
- ✓ **All pupils from Rec – Y6 will be expected to return on Monday 8th March.** School will still operate staggered start and finish times but we have worked hard to keep this to a 25 minute range from 8.45 – 9.10 start and 3pm – 3.15 finish.

Times are initially as follows. There may be adjustments, however, if issues arise.

Year group	Start time	Finish time	Assembly/drop off point	Collection point
Reception	9.10	3.00	Pupils (and one adult) line up alongside the railings (socially distanced) leading up to the main entrance. Pupils will be met by staff and welcomed into the building at their allocated time (using main entrance or 'back' door). Parents will then continue out through the yard in a one-way system.	Little yard
Year 1	9.05	3.15		Big yard
Year 2	9.05	3.15		Big yard
Year 3	8.55	3.10		Big yard
Year 4	8.55	3.10		Big yard
Year 5	8.45	3.05		Big yard
Year 6	8.45	3.05		Big yard

- ✓ Please arrive at your allotted time to prevent the unnecessary cross-over of contact groups. Adults on site, must wear a face covering unless medically exempt. Pupils are not permitted to play in the yard before school starts, or after school finishes, if waiting for siblings.

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- ✓ Classes will be collected from the yard and we will utilise both the main entrance and 'back' door for entrance and exit to speed up the process. Once a child has been dropped off, at the allocated time, a parent must leave the school site immediately. We ask that only one adult is involved in drop off/pick up. We understand families may have siblings who require different drop off times. Unfortunately, all we can do is ask for your patience and willingness to wait until your allocated drop off time, as we cannot accommodate various sibling arrangements. This does mean, unfortunately for some adults, the laps of the yard will begin again – sorry!
- ✓ Pupils in Y5 and Y6 will be able to travel to and from school, as long as they show they can socially distance, independently and we have your written permission. If concerns arise, or advice changes, this will be reviewed. If you are collecting a child in Y5 or Y6, please consider parking further from site to reduce any congestion.
- ✓ If families use public transport, we encourage you to follow the latest Public Health England guidance – if parents encourage children to wear face coverings, parents should demonstrate to pupils how these are to be safely removed before entering school.
- ✓ Mobile phones will not be allowed in school.
- ✓ If pupils make use of the bike shelter, only one person is allowed to use it at a time.
- ✓ At the end of the school day, pupils in Y1 – Y6 will be brought to the yard at their allocated time. Reception pupils will be dismissed from the little yard. We ask all those dropping off and collecting pupils to ensure they remain socially distanced. Younger siblings should always stay close to a grown-up and not run around or play on the equipment in the yard.
- ✓ Visitors will be restricted to essential support for individual pupils or to provide curriculum support. We encourage you to continue to contact us via phone or email.
- ✓ Pupils will operate in more defined contact groups around school, which may involve one year group or a few year groups combined.
- ✓ Playtimes and lunchtimes will be staggered.
- ✓ Breakfast club child care provision will still operate from 8am with additional expectations in place. Pupils attending breakfast club will be organised into small groups linked to year groups. We will have to know who, and how many, are attending in advance so please email if you require a place. If your child is going to attend breakfast club every day, you can just inform us at the start of the half term. Attending specific days is still optional but we will need to know which days, again, in advance. There will be a limit of 30 pupils allowed to attend breakfast club so if you do not book a place, your child may have to be added to a waiting list. The cost of breakfast club will be payable via ParentPay. If you cancel at short notice, you may still be charged, as this space could have potentially been allocated to another pupil.
- ✓ We will not be operating after school clubs for the time being. If you wish to explore after school provision, we suggest Dipton Out of Hours based at Dipton Collierley Primary School:
Contact number: 07941462390 – Debra Newton.
- ✓ Although we love our buddy system in school, at the moment, we will still not be able to allow mixing between Y6 and Reception. We hope this position changes soon.
- ✓ We are awaiting further information regarding swimming provision.
- ✓ We are not currently planning additional visits, but we are actively exploring what exciting activities we can arrange within school for every year group for the summer term. We will update you accordingly.

Hygiene/welfare facilities

- ✓ The need for frequent and thorough hand cleaning will continue to be reinforced constantly throughout the day – please keep nails cut short. Hand sanitiser stations will be situated in classrooms and around school. You may wish to ensure children's hands are moisturised regularly at home.
- ✓ Parents/Carers are asked to practise good hand cleaning techniques at home with children so they can apply

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- the method independently (i.e. 20 second - 'Happy Birthday' x2). This will also be reinforced daily in school.
- ✓ School uniform will be expected as usual. We ask that pupils wear clean clothing every day. For the majority of classes, outdoor jackets/bags will be kept in the classroom. Further information regarding bags is included below.
 - ✓ Good ventilation is going to be very important in school. As windows will be open, please ensure children wear plenty of layers to keep warm. Where possible, the school day will be broken up with more time outdoors.
 - ✓ Pupils should wash hands as soon as they arrive home and they should immediately change out of the clothes they have been wearing for school.
 - ✓ Please work on independence for tying laces.
 - ✓ On P.E. days, your child will be permitted to wear his/her PE kit all day instead of usual school uniform - plain black or grey jogging bottoms with usual yellow school PE top which will form part of the P.E. kit. Football strips etc. will not be permitted.
 - ✓ P.E. days will be confirmed this week via text. We will be encouraging additional physical activity so there will also be shorter sessions during the week which pupils will access in uniform.
 - ✓ Usual rules on longer hair being tied back (when reaching collar length) and no jewellery (earrings) apply.
 - ✓ Older children may be allocated set times to go to the toilet (they will of course be allowed to use the toilet if the need arises outside of these times) and younger children will be able to go as necessary.
 - ✓ Pupils and staff will be instructed to follow the 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'.
 - ✓ Extra cleaning regimes remain in place.

School lunch/water

- ✓ Children in Reception, Y1 and Y2 are all entitled to a free school meal. We strongly advise you to take up this option. This means children will be provided with a nutritious meal (of their choice) which is kinder to your pocket and in terms of your time. For those parents who pay for meals in Y3-Y6, the charge remains £2.10 (via ParentPay). Your child can bring in a clearly-named water bottle.

Personal belongings, school resources and curriculum changes

- ✓ Pupils in Reception, Y1 and Y2 who have a school lunch will only be permitted to bring in their green book bag. If any pupils in Rec, Y1 or Y2 wish to bring in a packed lunch, a small additional bag may be brought into school if their packed lunch will not fit in the book bag. No rucksacks will be permitted.
- ✓ Pupils in Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6 will use drawstring bags for their packed lunch, if applicable, reading book and/or water bottle. No other rucksack bags will be permitted at the moment as there is just not enough space. The majority of classes will store coats and bags in the classrooms, on the back of their chairs, to avoid continual cross-over in porches.
- ✓ Lunch boxes/water bottles should be thoroughly cleaned each night.
- ✓ Classrooms will continue to be forward facing where possible. This will mainly apply in Y3-Y6. Pupils in Rec, Y1 and Y2 will still operate in a similar vein to the way they work now and they will have greater access to shared equipment – although some restrictions will be in place. Resources in Rec, Y1 and Y2 will be regularly cleaned.
- ✓ Older pupils will be given a pack of individual key resources but will also have access, with a partner at their table, to additional equipment.
- ✓ Reading books can still pass between home and school but we will have to allow for 48 hours between exchange. Marking will be adjusted to allow exercise books to 'stand' for appropriate time before passing between teacher and pupil.
- ✓ We will continue to use Purple Mash to set homework. This is to restrict passing resources between home

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and school. Please contact us if you have any on-going issues with Purple Mash.

Pupils showing symptoms

- ✓ Please do not send your child to school if s/he is unwell.
- ✓ An isolation room has been set aside, should a child or staff member develop/show symptoms. If a child becomes poorly (displaying symptoms of coronavirus), it is imperative that parents can be contacted immediately and can collect their child without delay. Please ensure we have current contact information. We would expect pupils would access a coronavirus test – www.nhs.uk provides up to date advice regarding this as well as self-isolation time scales. If this situation occurs, we ask that school is contacted with the outcome so we are able to implement isolation protocols accordingly. School would respond to government guidelines regarding suspected/confirmed cases in school.

First aid

- ✓ As usual, there will be first aiders on site at all times. If a child has a minor injury e.g. a scraped knee, s/he may be asked to clean the injury independently. The first aider will always assess the situation. If the injury requires first aid, this will be administered. As this will require closer contact, the first aider will wear additional PPE – apron, gloves + face covering (mask/visor).
- ✓ At the time of writing this letter, the Department for Education does not recommend face coverings in school for primary pupils.

Summary of protocols

- ✓ Every pupil will be expected back on 8th March, unless any further guidance is issued in the interim.
- ✓ Staggered drop-offs and collection will remain until further notice – social distancing remains an integral part of a safe wider re-opening and it is very important that this is respected by everyone on the school site. Please
- ✓ If your child displays any symptoms of being unwell, they must not come into school and a Covid test must be booked.
- ✓ Breakfast club will be limited to 30 pupils and needs to be booked in advance.
- ✓ Contact with school should remain via phone or email.
- ✓ Our home learning expectations will be reintroduced should a contact group or individual have to self-isolate. School will continue to use Purple Mash for reading logs/homework.
- ✓ Masks must be worn by all adults accessing our school site unless medical exemption applies.

Finally, to keep everyone safe, we ask that you adhere to all current guidelines regarding mixing within your local community.

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SCHOOL UNIFORM REMINDER

Our pupils are frequently complimented on their standards of appearance and parents are asked to co-operate in ensuring that those standards are maintained. The wearing of, what we believe is, a very attractive uniform is of the greatest importance. The school also stresses that excessively short/shaved hair, as well as any form of patterned cut/patterned beaded hairstyle or hair colouring is not acceptable. Hair should always be tied back once it approaches collar length. Pupils should use only discrete, plain bobbles and hairbands with school uniform colours. For reasons of safety and security, the wearing of jewellery is not allowed.

School Uniform comprises:

- School Tie
- White Shirt
- Grey/Black School Trousers/Skirt/Pinafore
- Bottle Green Pullover/Cardigan
- White/Grey socks - not trainer socks
- Black Shoes – not trainer style

An optional summer uniform of green checked gingham dress would also be acceptable.

P.E. uniform is compulsory

Games/P.E. Kit comprises:

- Green Shorts
- Yellow T-shirt
- Training Shoes/plimsolls
- Plain grey/black jogging bottoms (no logos please)

School jumpers, cardigans, book bags and PE tops bearing the school logo can be ordered online from Tesco – using the same link above for book bags.

<https://myclothing.com/st-patricks-roman-catholic-va-primary-school-dipton/5606.school>

School ties can be purchased from school.

A green school book bag for pupils in Rec, Y1 and Y2 is also needed.

Outdoor play: Rec and KS1

To be prepared for outdoor play, pupils will also need a pair of wellies (which will remain in school).

All items of clothing should be marked with the name of the pupil. Sew in/iron on labels are much more effective.

For pupils forgetting ties, a supply of spare ties is available for a one-day loan.

Please contact us on diptonstpatricks@durhamlearning.net should you have any additional queries.

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