

Back To School

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are delighted to be able to welcome everybody back to school when the new term begins on **Thursday, September 3rd**. I am sure that many of you will have questions about the year ahead. We have taken a number of steps to make the school environment as safe as possible but there are still some ways in which you can help to ensure that the risk of spreading Covid 19 remains low. Please take some time to fully read this letter, the accompanying DFE guidance leaflet and the updated information on school dinners.

Attending school is compulsory

Education is not optional. We know that you want the best possible start in life for your children and this includes ensuring that they receive a high-quality education that promotes their development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. By working together now to model a resilient and sensible approach towards tackling the significant problems that we are currently facing, we will help children learn how to overcome the difficulties that life holds. Some situations are harder to resolve than others and if you are facing exceptional difficulties please let us know so that we can support you in ensuring that your child can return to full time education as quickly as possible. As always, issuing penalty notices remains a last resort but please be aware that if we are unable to reach you to find out why your child is not in school our options will become limited.

Classes

Our classes are changing! This academic year there will be an extra class, making five classes instead of four. Organising children into five groups will allow us to provide more space to keep everyone as safe as possible, despite the small size of some of our classrooms. This means that we are now in a position to welcome back all of our pupils. All five classes have a maximum of 23 pupils. Without creating an extra class we would have 30+ pupils in our KS2 classes, which would not allow us to operate as fully as possible at the current time. The classes are as follows:

Class	Year Groups	Teacher	Room	Drop off/ Collection Point
Pixies	Reception/Year 1	Miss Amy Slater	Pixies Classroom	Pixies playground door
Elves	Year 1/Year 2	Mrs Rosie Chettleborough and Mrs Lyn Wallace	Elves Classroom	Elves playground door
Unicorns	Year 3	Mr Josh Wallington	Unicorn Classroom is in the hall.	External hall door
Dragons	Year 4/Year 5	Ms Bertie Hornibrook	Dragons Classroom	Dragons external door (under the canopy at the back of Dragons Class)
Wizards	Year 5/Year 6	Mrs Alison Stevens	Wizards Classroom	Main entrance

You will see that we have split Year 1 and Year 5. In the current situation, the benefits of this arrangement clearly outweigh the disadvantages, allowing us to:

- keep class sizes small;
- protect the health of pupils and staff by providing sufficient working space;
- implement our broad and balanced curriculum;
- enable effective catch up;
- minimise disruption to pupils in the event of a confirmed case of Covid 19.

If your children are in Year 1 or Year 5, you will receive an e-mail to let you know which class they are in. Throughout the day, pupils will only have contact with their class group and members of the teaching staff. Playtimes will occur in an allotted space and lunches will be served in classrooms. We know that splitting year groups can cause difficulties with friendships but children usually settle very quickly. Classes have not been split on ability as all of our teachers are highly educated and are used to meeting a wide range of learning needs on a daily basis.

I have taken on a full teaching commitment in order to make the smaller class size possible, which will allow the school to fully open. You can help by working with your child's class teacher to resolve any concerns and directing e-mails to the school office. I will be able to offer a weekly 'Headteacher's Surgery' from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 pm every Thursday and appointments to talk to me can be booked through the school office. This arrangement will allow me to protect teaching and learning time for my class, as well as ensuring that pupils don't miss out on vital catch up sessions.

The School Day

Children should **arrive promptly at 8:45 a.m.** and will **finish the school day at 3:15 pm** as usual. We have decided not to use the staggered entry and exit times that were in place before the summer holidays because a number of parents have to wait for children in different year groups and where space is limited, this increases problems with social distancing. We ask you to maintain a sensible distance when dropping children off and when collecting them at the end of the school day.

Please be prompt in leaving the school site in order to reduce the risk of spreading Covid 19. If you wish to speak to the class teacher, you should telephone the school office and ask for a call back, which you will receive after 3:30 pm. Mrs Larisa Cozma, our new Office Administrator, will pass on any urgent messages.

Illness

It is important that you do not send your child to school if they are ill.

If your child becomes ill whilst they are at school we will notify you straightaway and you will need to collect them from the main entrance without delay. If they have any symptoms of Covid 19 you must arrange for a test and inform us of the result before they return to school so that we can act promptly to protect other people.

Breakfast and After School Clubs

Children cannot mix groups at the beginning and end of the school day for safety reasons. We know that many of you rely on clubs in order to be able to manage your working day. Unfortunately, in order to make the rest of the school day run smoothly, we are unable to offer clubs at present. Due to supervision needs at break and lunchtimes, teachers have a very full day and need to be given sufficient time to prepare for the following day. This means that they will not be able to run after school clubs. However, we will be looking at the viability of asking Teaching Assistants to run a homework and/or quiet activity club for each class from 3:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. This will depend on there being a sufficient take up of places to cover the cost of staffing hours as well as on the availability of staff. If you would like to commit to your child/children attending an after school club, please let us know by contacting the school office. It may be possible for us to proceed if there is sufficient interest. Breakfast club cannot go ahead at present.

Uniform and Equipment

Pupils should wear full uniform as always. They should bring a labelled bottle of water to sip throughout the day, rather than using the water fountain. Pencil cases should be small enough for children to manage within their own desk space. You may wish to send your child to school with a small bottle of hand sanitiser; we have strong hygiene routines in place but some people feel reassured by the additional protection. Uniform and personal items must be labelled. Please do not bring PE kit to school. Instead, please send your child to school wearing trainers (or other suitable footwear) and warm, loose clothing suitable for sport on the days that they have PE. All children will need to bring a waterproof coat everyday as more teaching will be taking place outdoors. Teachers will let you know when PE takes place. Book bags should still be used. Pupils do not need to wear masks. **Please wipe down equipment and wash uniform at the end of each day.**

Catching Up

As soon as children return to school we will be working to diagnose any gaps in learning so that we can implement an effective and manageable catch up programme as quickly as possible. It is important to remember that all pupils are likely to need some kind of catch up and we aim to blend this with our

curriculum as smoothly as possible. We are committed to ensuring that children cover ground quickly and hope that circumstances allow you to support us by ensuring that strong routines are in place to enable children to arrive at school promptly with everything they need and that at the end of the day they have a quiet time to complete homework. You will find that there is more homework than usual, particularly for our older children, and it will be important for them to complete this and to return it to school on time as it may well form the basis for teaching and learning the next day.

The Term Ahead

This term we will be conservationists! We will be finding out about how to protect our planet and why it is important to protect our environment. We are still unable to run school trips but there will be a lot of exciting things happening within school. We will keep you posted!

We look forward to welcoming everyone back next week.

Best wishes,

Bertie Hornibrook (Headteacher)