

September 2020

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to the Autumn term, that is at least a little more normal! I'd like to say a huge thank you to you all for the amazing job that you have done in preparing your children for their return to school after such a long period of uncertainty and change. Attendance has been very good, with almost all children now back with us. I was a very proud Headteacher on Thursday and Friday, watching our children walk back into school so confidently and happily. We have missed them all and are so glad to welcome them back into their classrooms.

Thank you also for following our rules and routines so well. As you know, all children are back in school from today and it is vital that we all continue to follow the new processes in order to keep us all safe. Can I remind you of the following routines that were described in my letter and action plan in July.

- Our gates will open at 8.45am for our 8.50am starters **ONLY**, (Years 2, 3, 5 and Reception when they start full time).
- Children in Years 1, 4 and 6 **SHOULD NOT** be on site until 8.55am, ready for their 9.00am start. Please keep children with you if they have siblings who start earlier. Please do not send children to line up.
- Please help us maintain our social distance and reduce numbers on site by not coming through the gates until 5 minutes before your start time.
- Please use the correct gate – the main pedestrian gate for KS2 and the gate further along Grendon Road for KS1 and Reception.
- After school our gates open at 3.00pm for our 3.05pm finishers **ONLY**, (Years 2, 3, 5 and Reception when they start full time).
- Please do not come on to site until 3.10pm if you are collecting children in Years 1, 4 and 6 who finish at 3.15pm.

In order for our day to run smoothly, we need to stick firmly to drop off and collection times. **Please** drop off and collect your child at the correct time. We have a very tight schedule and little room for manoeuvre! There were a few children late this morning, which means they may come into contact with other year groups. **There were also a lot of Year 4 and Year 6 children who came into school at 8.45am, although their start time is 9.00am. As our July information and Friday's text message stated, please ensure that Year 1, 4 and 6 are not on site until 8.55am. Keep siblings with you if you have earlier starters. Do not send children to line up.**

We have got all staff in the playground at the moment. Quite rightly, most are with children in their lines, particularly in the side playground where parents can no longer wait. This means that there are only a few members of staff left to direct parents and ensure routes are followed. Please help us to do this and keep us all safe by ensuring you follow the above process every day.

Most of you will have read in my July letter the arrangements and our action plan for reopening. These documents, along with some frequently asked questions can still be found on our website on the News and Events tab. Please click on Covid-19. I will let you read the information for yourself but am aware that there are a few myths to bust which I will do here and now!

- If children have any of the 3 symptoms of Covid-19 while at school, we will isolate them in a well ventilated room away from other children and contact parents immediately. Children will be supervised by an adult at all times, but we will try and maintain a 2 metre distance.

- Parents will be asked to collect their child and arrange for them to have a test – we will provide details as to how.
- If the test is negative, children can return to school straight away. If it is positive, they must isolate for 10 days and the rest of your household for 14 days.
- If you choose to not get your child tested, you will be asked to self-isolate as above and not return to school for 14 days. This will be hugely disruptive to their learning, so I would urge you all to book a test for anybody with symptoms.
- We will **not** test your child at school. We will **not** be giving them any kind of injection. We will **not** be isolating your child overnight in school. I have heard the rumours and ‘fake news’ that schools will be doing these things. **We will not.** We will simply call you, ask you to collect your child and look after your child until you do so.

I would also like to confirm the Government guidance for the use of face coverings in schools that states:

- Primary pupils do not need to wear face coverings in school.
- If your child is wearing a face covering on their journey to school, you must ensure they have a sealed plastic bag in which to store their mask in school.
- It is essential that if this is the case, they understand how to take them off and put them on safely, without touching the front of the mask and that they do not touch their masks while they are on.
- Staff will not be wearing face coverings in the classrooms or when working with children.

As you will have read in July, we are not providing hot meals in school at the moment. We are providing packed lunches (which are free to all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and for those entitled to free school meals in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6). Children are able to bring in their own packed lunch as an alternative. Please remember to include cutlery if needed e.g. a spoon for yoghurt.

We know it is more difficult for us to see parents in school at the moment and that there is less contact with your child’s class teacher. Remember that the year group emails set up during lockdown (for example year1@grendon.bham.sch.uk) are still in use if you need to contact staff directly. We can also arrange phone calls with staff if needed. The school office is open daily between 9.10am – 9.30am once children are inside school. We ask that only one parent enters the office area at a time. Please use the yellow markings on the ramp if you are waiting. Because of this, we suggest anything that can be addressed by email (enquiry@grendon.bham.sch.uk) or by phone (0121 474 2460) is done in this way.

Moving away slightly from Covid-19, our plan this year was always to move towards ‘paperless’ communication with parents as it is quick, efficient, saves us money and is better for the environment! School closure further highlighted the need to communicate effectively. Over the next few weeks, we will be collecting email addresses from all parents and carers in order that we can email you directly with school communications. Please ensure these are provided and are recorded accurately. All communications will also be available on our website. We know many of you found it useful during lockdown. Please keep yourselves up to date with it. All the information you need is on there. I hope this will be one of the last paper based letters that we send out.

Finally, I would like to thank you again for all of your support over the last few months. It has been a new and challenging time for us all and while children are now back in school, it is very different to before. I expect there to be further challenges over the coming months as the global and national situation continues to change. However, we also know that this is an opportunity to improve further, build even stronger relationships and work together to make Grendon an even more successful place. I look forward leading that.

Kind regards,

Mrs Ridley

Headteacher