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Head Teacher: Mrs K Barkley



Welcome Newsletter: September 2020

I am delighted to welcome you to the start of this new academic year. As your new Head Teacher I am very much looking forward to serving the Viewley Hill community and working hard to ensure the very best for our children. To those parents, carers and children returning, and for those children and families who are just joining us, I hope that despite the restrictions, you have all had an enjoyable summer and you are looking forward to the year ahead.

As we reopen the academy to all children, I fully appreciate that there has been considerable time since the majority of pupils have been to school, and that transitions and introductions for new pupils have not been able to take place in person. The staff have worked incredibly hard to prepare for the children returning and the most important role we all have in the coming weeks is to support children in returning, ensuring they feel happy and safe at school.

I hope that this newsletter answers some of the questions you as families may have about how the school will be managing COVID guidelines, as well as sharing with you important information for this next year.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to ring the academy, or to speak to a member of staff on the gate at the beginning or end of the day. We are more than happy to help.

I, along with the all the staff, look forward to seeing you at social distance over the coming weeks, and to what I am sure will be a successful year ahead.

With best wishes for 2020-2021

Mrs K Barkley

Head Teacher

ATTENDANCE

From September all children are expected to return to school, and so normal school attendance rules apply. As parents and carers you need to ensure your child attends school everyday, and we will be contacting you should your child be absent.

There will however, be no penalty for following Public Health England advice around COVID-19. Should you be concerned your child has symptoms, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

It continues to be school policy that holidays in term time will not be authorised unless for exceptional circumstances, and referrals to the local authority for fixed penalty notices will be made in line with government guidance.

Please be open with us if you are intending to go away so we know that you and your child are safe, and avoid us reporting a child to the Local Authority as 'missing in education'. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

CLASSROOMS AND THE ACADEMY OFFER

To support and encourage social distancing, some of the furniture has been removed from classrooms to allow everyone more space, and the children will sit facing forwards, rather than opposite each other. The rooms still have age appropriate resources, but less than normal. When younger children are playing in areas, we will reduce the number of pupils in an area at a time to allow them all more space.

We recognise that the children may feel nervous or worried about returning to school, and so there is as much of a focus on supporting the pupils social and emotional needs as their academic learning.

The children will stay in their classes throughout the day. Each phase of school has a set playtime, and classes have their own outdoor spaces. They will also have their own outdoor equipment to use and following government guidance, there will be no contact sports played at this time. Unfortunately we are unable to have whole school events, and so assemblies will take place in individual classes and over zoom.

The children will have their lunch in the hall, followed by time outside, again in their own classes.

If the weather is kind, we hope to be able to spend some time learning outside, enjoying the fresh air as much as possible.

Every week we will review the guidance, and our protocols to ensure the very best, and safe opportunities for our children.

THE SCHOOL DAY: START AND FINISH TIMES

The timetable below is a reminder of the start and finish times. We have extended the time to allow for more social distance, and we ask you to support this by ensuring you do not congregate at the school gates. We ask that parents and carers of pupils in Y1-Y6 leave their pupils at the gate and not to enter the school site unless absolutely necessary. Staff will be on the gates every morning and afternoon to support you and your child.

Year Group	Arrival	Dismissal
Morning Nursery	8.30am—8.50am	11.15am
Afternoon Nursery	12.30pm (Sure start path)	3pm
Reception	8.30-8.50am	1.30pm (2nd—10th Sept) 2.30pm (from 14th September)
Key Stage 1 (Y1 & Y2)	8.30-8.50am	2.45—3pm
Key Stage 2 (Y3—Y6)	8.30—8.50am	2.50pm—children who walk home on their own 3-3.15—children being collected

At the end of the day children who are collected will be handed over to their family member one at a time. **If you are on site please follow the one way system and maintain social distance by waiting on the spots on the ground.** Please be patient with this process as the staff get to know the families of their new class. This process is very important for the safety of your child so thank you in advance for your support.

PARENTS AND VISITORS

In order to maintain social distance and keep everyone as safe as possible, parents will not be allowed on site unless for exceptional circumstances. We are committed to supporting you and your families and ask that communication is via phone or email where possible.

We will be on the gate every day for any short conversation or questions. We are more than happy to arrange to ring you if you wish to discuss anything in detail.

SITE RULES

Whilst we are asking that parents do not come on site unless absolutely necessary, the rules for being on site are as follows:



COVID SYMPTOMS AND TESTING

If your child displays symptoms whilst at home then you should inform us by telephone, keep your child at home for 10 days and you **MUST** arrange for your child to have a test to see if they have COVID-19. If they display symptoms at school your child will be moved to a separate area of the building and you will be phoned and asked to collect them immediately, which you must be available to do.

In order to protect the Viewley Hill community, it is very important that you inform the school if you or your child has symptoms or has tested positive for COVID -19.

If a member of your household has symptoms, all other members of the household must also stay at home for 14 days, or until a negative test result has been confirmed.

COVID SYMPTOMS: new and persistent cough OR high temperature OR loss or change in sense of taste or smell.

If you are unsure about how to manage symptoms, or how to go about arranging test, please ask and we will support you where we can.

Links to information from the government will be available on the website at all times.

UNIFORM AND PE KIT

Full uniform must worn when children return to school this week. Jewellery and nail varnish should not be worn. Children may wear small silver or gold studs, if their ears are pierced, but must remove them for PE.

The uniform supports a school learning culture, and so we ask that you do not 'jazz up' the uniform with decorative accessories of coloured socks and tights. Children will be asked to remove any unsuitable items to take home at the end of the day.

PE kits are also needed. **Where possible children will do PE outside** and so please ensure your child has both their indoor kit as well as suitable clothing and footwear for doing PE outside.

COLLECTION PROCEDURES

This week your child will bring home with them a letter about collection procedures for the end of the school day. This allows you to name people who are able to collect your child from school, as well as provide a password for emergency situations.

Having this detail in the academy allows us all clear communication for the end of the day, as well as ensure your child's safety at all times.

Please complete the letter and return to school this week.

SCHOOL MEALS

If your child is entitled to a free school meal then this will be provided from Wednesday. This includes all Reception, Y1 and Y2 pupils as they are entitled under the universal free school meal system.

If you pay for your child to have a meal then you can also do this from this week.

Please be aware that for the first 2 weeks the school meal offer will be a packed lunch. We will return to hot meals as soon as possible and I will share the date with you later this week.

If you have any questions about school dinners please do not hesitate to ring the office who will be happy to help you.

BOOK BAGS AND BOTTLES

At the very start of term your child does not need to bring anything to school other than their packed lunch if they have one. We will provide all equipment the children will need during the day, including disposable cups for a drink during the day. We will inform you when children can bring their book bags into school, which will be within a few weeks of the start of term.

BREAKFAST AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

There will be no breakfast club or afterschool in place at the very start of this term. Whilst I appreciate how important this facility is to the community, we must first ensure that our key measures for the school day are successful. I will share with you the plan for these provisions as soon as possible.

PARENT / TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Ensuring your child is happy and safe in school is our highest priority, and our communication is such an important part of this. Staff will be on the gate every day, and whilst COVID restrictions are in place, teachers will come out on a rota too, so you are able to see them. Should however, you wish to speak to your child's teacher in more detail, please ring the office, or speak to a member of staff on the gate, and your child's teacher will ring you during non teaching times.

HYGIENE & CLEANING

As we prepare for all children to return, we have again increased the cleaning routine in the academy.

As well as daily cleaning at the end of the day, staff will also clean down areas throughout the day; with toilets, handrails and communal areas are also being cleaned over lunchtimes.

Regular handwashing will also be part of your child's routine when in school with posters around the building to remind children how important it is.

STRATEGIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

All members of staff here at Viewley are committed the school and take a role in developing our core offer. For your information, please see below the detail of your strategic school leaders.

Mrs Barkley: Head Teacher

Mrs Gardiner: Deputy Head Teacher

Mrs Scaife: Assistant Head Teacher

Mrs Glendon: SENDCo

Mrs Lowe: School Business Manager

Communication with you our parents and families is of the highest priority. If you have any queries you would like to speak to one of us about, please do not hesitate to speak to us on the gate, or ring the school and we will arrange a time to talk to you in more detail.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REMINDER

If your child has any new allergies or medical needs, please advise the office staff as soon as possible so that we can arrange to discuss them with you, and ensure that appropriate care and provisions are in place for your child.

Thank you for working with us to keep your child safe.

FAMILY SUPPORT

As we welcome you back this year, please remember we are here to help you if you wish to talk about attendance, punctuality, any worries you may have or you want to share relevant family information.

Mrs Moore can support you, as well as sign post you to other agencies, should this be of help to you.

You will see her, along with other staff, on the gate, but if you wish to have a private conversation with her please just ask and she will arrange to speak to you.

COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS

As well as our face to face and phone contact with you, please remember that you can access information about the school via the **website** and **twitter**.

In addition we will continue to share messages and celebrate your child's achievements with you through **Marvellous Me**.

We hope to introduce further social media and online platforms to the school and I look forward to sharing details later this term.

PPE AND MASKS

Staff carrying out any clinical or imitate care are provided with PPE and will wear it to carry out these duties. It is not recommended by the government that staff or children in primary schools wear masks during the day and so this will not be expected as we return.

We will keep up to date with guidance and inform you as soon as possible should this position change.

HOME LEARNING

As I have previously shared, we are expecting all children to return to school this week.

If your child is unable to attend due to needing to follow the stay at home guidance for COVID-19, then home learning will be provided. This will be a mixture of paper based, and online learning so that we can continue to support your child in their academic progress.

Children will be expected to engage in this work, providing they are well enough to, and teachers will be happy to answer any questions should you have them.

WHOLE SCHOOL EVENTS

The whole school community coming together is such an important part of school life and one that I firmly believe in. However, at this time we are unable to plan for parents to be in school or for events which mix groups of pupils. Please be assured that as soon as safely possible, we will look to celebrate and share as a school community and I will keep you updated with any potential future dates.

DATES FOR THE AUTUMN TERM

Please find below the term dates, and planned PD Days for this term. Detail is also available on our website.

Autumn Term 2020:

Wednesday 2nd September: All children return to school

Friday 9th October: School Closed—PD Day

Thursday 15th October: Family photograph day (*this is a provisional date dependent upon COVID restrictions and guidance*)

Friday 23rd October : Last day of half term

Monday 2nd November: Children return to school

Friday 18th December: End of term

TOGETHR MOVING FORWARD

Whilst there is a lot of information in this first newsletter, I hope that it answers questions you may have, and provides you with the initial detail for the start of this academic year.

All plans are subject to review, and you will be kept up to date with any changes we need to make in order to ensure the safety of our community.

We welcome any feedback, be it positive or constructive suggestions for improvement, so please speak to staff should you wish to.

With many thanks, in advance, for your support in us working together for our children and the community.

