

Newsletter March 2nd 2021

Less than a week to go and we are really gearing up for the full return of pupils next Monday.

We look forward to welcoming some pupils back on Thursday and Friday – if this applies to your child they will have had an invite through their class teacher by now.

We know times of transition often cause worries and after what we have all been through in the past two months that is entirely understandable but please know all the strict mitigations we had in place previously will still be in place. We are not slackening our stance of COVID yet.

We are not out of the woods yet. Schools reopening is the first small step to getting us all out of this situation. Please don't change your behaviours too early unless all we have been through over the past two months comes to nothing. No one wants another lockdown of schools!

A full risk assessment and return to school document has now been completed and ratified by the governors and is available for all to read on the school website in the school policies section:

<http://www.peartreeprimary.co.uk/page/covid-19-risk-assessment/75444>

This lists all the actions we shall be taking to reduce the risk to everyone inside the building and beyond in our wider community. In addition to those we previously had, we now have every member of the school staff undertaking twice weekly lateral flow tests. In addition, many staff have now qualified for a vaccine and we expect this call up to vaccinate to continue at a pace over the coming month.

Pods

Just as before, the Pods will be organised as shown below:

Linked Pods
Red and Orange are linked Yellow is a pod on its own Blue and Green are linked Indigo and Violet are linked Only adults can move between class Pods. Children will play and learn in class distinct pods.

What if I think my child is ill?

Children who are well need to come to school. Ill children need to stay at home and as soon as anyone in a house is being COVID tested you must keep your child/ren out until a negative test is returned. The 10-day isolation period must be followed but as long as your child is symptom free on day 11 they can return to school. You didn't take risks last term with your own children, other people's children or our staff and neither did we. We sent staff or children showing any illness symptoms home quickly and you helped us with this. This must continue. It works.

Importantly please note that the new variants also has some different symptoms;

'The most common symptoms of COVID-19(new variant), are fever, dry cough, and tiredness. Other symptoms that are less common and may affect some patients include loss of taste or smell, aches and pains, headache, sore throat, nasal congestion, red eyes, diarrhoea, or a skin rash.'

Please see: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/> for more details.

We would ask you continue to follow the 'if in doubt keep your child out' view. It may be as simple as waiting one day to see if a cough goes away, a headache passes or nausea fades. You must continue the 48hr rule if your child is sick or has diarrhoea. Whilst we want every well child in school, we must insist you take a cautious view for everyone's sake.

You know your children best but 'I thought I'd send them in and see how they got on', is currently not the approach we should adopt. The same is being said to staff and we have even stricter rules inside the building now than we had before.

Cleaning remains very high priority, as is hand washing and the catch it, bin it, kill it message. Staff must not mix except with their bubbles and masks must be worn by adults in all communal areas. Please support us by reiterating the personal hygiene messages at home and actively encouraging your child to keep their hands out of their mouths.

Staffing, Lunches, Pips and Remote Learning

Realistically we expect that we may face staffing issues in the weeks ahead.

Please understand we cannot always move staff as this increases risk and currently we won't bring in supply staff as we cannot guarantee where they have been working.

In the event of a bubble closing. We will move back to remote learning and we will explain how that works at that point in time.

Lunches too must continue with the grab bag option for now. Lunchboxes/bags from home can come in as they did before Christmas but must be thoroughly washed each night. Please see attached menu.

Drop off and Pick up

The timings for drop off and collection will stay the same as before the holiday but please stick to your allocated slot as it spreads out movement at gates and we must absolutely insist you wear masks and **do not congregate outside the school gates or on the playground**. We aim to get the children out to you as quickly as we can but masks, coats, hats, scarves and our eyesight can make us a little slow at times – thanks to those who give us a friendly wave!

It is uncomfortable for staff to have to ask parents to move on so please don't meet socially outside of school or let children start playing together on the grass at the front of school. Leave dogs tied to the long fence outside the front not in gateways and collect and go immediately at the end of the day and after drop off. Please remember though we are not community police and cannot totally dictate what parents do beyond our gate. We can just ask politely that you respect our efforts inside school to protect your children and you do the same outside the boundaries.

Finally, please can you use the pub car park for parking and not the road and never pull into either of the school gateways.

Drop Off:

8.40 to 8.50am A to M

8.50 to 9.00am N to Z

Drop off Location;

Side gate off path – Year 5 and Years 6

Front right gate – Reception.

Front right main gate - Year 1

Front left hand gate – Years 2, 3 and 4.

Pick up:

3.00 to 3.10pm A to M

3.10 to 3.20pm N to Z

Pick up Location;

Side gate off path – Year 5 and Years 6

Main school yard – Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

Front left hand gate – Years 3 and 4

Staff contact and temperature checks

We will maintain our temperature checks but have asked staff to step well back from parents so please send your child forward to their allocated gate to be temperature checked. Staff are now asked not to have long chats outside. If you need a quick word that's fine but otherwise email and a call back can be arranged. We prefer to talk not send endless emails as so much can be lost in them. However, we continue to ask you to be kind and considerate to staff in the way in which you communicate and the times you send emails. Aggression will not be tolerated.

Book Bags/Reading Diaries/Lunchboxes and 'stuff' from home

Book Bags, reading diaries and lunchboxes can all return but please **use these only** and stop sending in additional carrier bags filled with bits wherever possible. We need the movement of items between home and school to stay at a minimal level hence homework going on line but do feel we can return to diaries and reading books.

Washing uniform

We would recommend a more frequent washing of uniform routine still. It reduces cross contamination risk.

Homework

No homework books will be sent home for at least the next two weeks. Each week teachers will upload a small activity to teams as they have started to do before the holidays. Each class teacher will tell you how this is to be returned. Spellings will also be sent out this way.

PE/Forest School Days

On the days your child has PE or Forest School sessions, (your child's class teacher will tell you this) then please send your child for the whole of those days in PE kit/Forest school suitable clothing not uniform. This avoids extra clothes in school and stops children having to change.

Free School Meals

Sadly, we know this is a difficult time for many of our families. If you feel you may now qualify for free school meals, please apply. This supports your child and their education. See; https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/free_school_meals.aspx to check if you are eligible. If you have previously applied and been turned down. Do check again if your circumstances have now changed.

Pips

PIPS will be available for breakfast and after school club from the 8th March. Please fill in a new regular booking form and/or March adhoc form. We will not assume your previous regular bookings will continue. Please complete and return as soon as possible should you need breakfast or afterschool cover.

We are now all back in the hall. Reception and year 1 will be in the small hall, please use the main small hall door for drop off and collection.

Years 2,3 & 4 will be at the end of the main hall with years 5 & 6 in the middle of the hall. Please use the main hall door for both of these pods.

The children will be able to play in their year groups, with different activities every after school club. Hot food will continue to be available for teas, which will be served at 4: 30pm.

Please contact either Mrs Nixon in the school office 01270 906120 or Katherine or Shelley on the PIPS phone 07908192451 if you have any questions or queries.

Here to help

Finally, we are a big family. We are here to help one another. We know many are finding this time really difficult. No one has come through the last 12 months without facing challenges. That is the staff, the children and our families. If we can help you, we will. I know at times parents have just rung up for a chat because they have needed to talk through a worry, they have needed advice or quite honestly just someone to listen. No, we are not medically trained, we are not counsellors, but we can listen, and it is amazing how many times we have signposted parents, found support networks or simply said 'Oh we can do that, no problem'. You only need to ask.

And finally....

Celebrate the end of Lockdown home learning by joining us for.... **The Pear Tree Kitchen Disco hour.** This Friday, March 5th local DJ Joel Olszewski has brilliantly offered to run an online Disco from 6 to 7p.m. especially for Pear Tree families. All free of charge! Look out for the link later this week and you can log in to a full set of great songs to dance round your kitchen too, lift your spirits and celebrate surviving Lockdown 3.0 with. This is a public platform, but the set will be personalised for Pear Tree. Look out for further details but dust off your glitter ball and dancing shoes and set 6 till 7 p.m. this Friday aside for a dance!