

COLDWALTHAM, ST. JAMES' C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

with Chuckleberries Pre School

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Learn, Discover, Achieve

27th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Arrangements for the full re-opening of the school

Monday 8th March 2021

I hope that you are well and enjoying this weekend; the weather is looking a lot brighter so I hope that you are going to be able to take advantage of it, following national guidelines, of course!

As you are all aware, following Boris Johnson's announcement on Monday, we are very pleased to be able to say that St. James' will be reopening fully to all children on **Monday 8th March**. I think that there is a collective sense of relief about this as it has been a very difficult period for all the children, parents/carers and school staff and we are all looking forward to some sense of normality returning.

As with previous returns to school, we are required to ensure there are arrangements in place to continue to help keep the whole school community safe and to ensure the school can remain open. Whilst statistics relating to the rate of infection are promising and many people are now being vaccinated against Covid-19, it is still crucial that all members of the school community are following procedures that will safeguard everybody from the risk of contracting the virus.

National Guidelines Reminders

In order for any of the measures that we put in place at school to have an effect and in order for the school to remain open, we would urge you as families to ensure that you are following the national lockdown guidelines that are still in place to prevent any possible cases developing within the school.

From Monday 8th March, the full community will be attending school and, whilst we can ensure that the school environment stays safe with the measures that we put in place, it is your responsibility to ensure that your behaviour outside school does not place the children, adults and families represented within school at a higher risk than is already present.

We have been delighted that there has not been a single case of Covid-19 within the school community since September 2020. In order for this to be maintained, we thank you for being vigilant in your personal and professional lives.



Cleaning, handwashing, PPE and LFD testing for staff

The school have had rigorous arrangements for cleaning and handwashing in place since the emergence of Covid-19 last year and these will continue to be in place on the children's return to school. The premises are cleaned thoroughly every day and regular wiping of surfaces takes place within classrooms and other areas throughout the school day.

Children will be expected to wash their hands on arrival at school, at regular times throughout the day, will use hand sanitiser and will wash their hands before they leave to come home.

The guidance regarding children wearing face masks remains the same; unless there is a specific reason for your child to wear a face mask, it is viewed as detrimental to learning for them to do so. As prior to the lockdown, there will be arrangements in place to maintain social distancing as far as possible within the classrooms (although it is recognised that this is not always possible to implement). Children will be reminded that they should not be touching each other and the 'Catch It, Bag It, Bin It, Kill It' policy will remain with regards to sneezing/coughing.

If, for any reason, as a parent/carer, you are required to come into school (e.g. for an arranged meeting, to pick up a child due to illness, etc.), you will be required to wear a face mask as would be expected in other indoor spaces, such as shops and doctors' surgeries.

A new procedure that has been introduced during this period of lockdown is the bi-weekly testing of staff using LFD (Lateral Flow Device) testing. This is an optional regular testing scheme for adults who work on the school site regularly; we are proud to say that all of our staff have opted in to the testing scheme as they all feel a collective sense of responsibility to be able to ensure that the school is a safe and virus-free environment. We have been very grateful for their cooperation with this.

Children in primary schools are not subject to any regular testing. Testing of students is entirely a secondary school arrangement.

Attendance

Full-time attendance will be **mandatory immediately** from 8th March, with no allowances being made for any families that may have people shielding or personal concerns about the virus. Absence for this reason will be recorded as unauthorised.

As a school, we recognise that a full-time return to school may be overwhelming for a very small number of children. Whilst we fully encourage all children to return to school full-time immediately, we are aware that some parents/carers may feel that a phased return may benefit their child *for the first week*. If you feel that this is something that you may need to consider for your child, please contact Mrs Martin directly at hos@coldwalthamschool.com as this is a decision which will need to be made at a senior level in consultation with class teachers.

If children or members of their family show symptoms of Covid-19, they must remain at home until a PCR test has been taken. Should a negative result be recorded, children may return to school immediately. Should a positive test be recorded for themselves or a family member, children will need to remain at home for the period of time indicated in national guidelines. **The school needs to be informed immediately if a positive test is recorded.**

Home learning

Due to attendance at school being mandatory, schools are now under a statutory obligation to provide home learning for those children who are absent due to self-isolation or whilst awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test for themselves or a member of their family.

From 8th March, if your child is absent **due to self-isolation not illness**, you will be contacted by your child's class teacher with a set of resources for them to continue their learning with. *There will be an expectation that the children undertake the work and it be submitted for feedback via the class email address; the work is mandatory not optional.*

Please may we stress that if your child is absent due to illness, you will not be contacted with home learning; this is for children who are absent but still well and are having to stay at home due to the Covid-19 guidelines in place.

Drop-off and pick-up times

We will be continuing with the procedures that we had in place prior to the lockdown in January with regard to dropping children off and picking them up.

Only **one** parent/carer should be dropping children off and picking them up. Parents/carers are asked to drop off and to collect promptly with no congregating; please observe social distancing at all times.

All adults are required to wear face masks unless exempt due to sensory/medical conditions. All school staff will be wearing face masks at drop-off and pick-up times.

Drop-off

The school day will start at **8:45am** and we will be implementing the system that we had in place whereby we will ask for strict adherence to national guidelines when walking up and down Church Lane. Please can I ask that parents/carers aim to arrive at school as close to 8:45am as possible. ***Please do not arrive earlier and congregate in any public area or outside the school gates.*** If you drive to school and arrive early, please can you wait in your vehicle until as close to 8:45am as possible. If you walk to school, please try to ensure that your timing means you will be walking up Church Lane and dropping your child off immediately, not waiting in Church Lane.

When walking to the school, please walk on the **left-hand side of the lane** in **single-family groups**, maintaining **at least** a one metre distance between yourselves and the family in front.

On arrival at the school, there will be a senior member of staff to greet children at the main gate. The children will be expected to walk into school independently with no parents/carers coming on to site. There will be TAs placed at spaced intervals down the drive to ensure that children go into school safely.

Ash Class will continue to use the door to the side of the building whilst Elm and Yew Class will continue to use the main doors at the back of the school to enter. In all classrooms, the teachers will be waiting to greet the children and settle them into school.

There will not be the opportunity to talk to your child's class teacher at the school gate in a morning; if there is something that they need to know urgently, please contact them via the class email or phone/email the School Office to request that a message be passed on.

On leaving the school gate, please walk on the **left-hand side of the lane** in **single-family groups**, maintaining **at least** a one metre distance between yourselves and the family in front.

Pick-up

The timings that were in place previous to half-term remain in place for each class, these being:

Class	Pick-up time
Ash	3:05pm
Elm	3:10pm
Yew	3:15pm

Teachers will bring their classes out to the school gate at their allocated time, lining them up in sibling order to allow the waiting area to be cleared as promptly as possible (i.e. Ash Class will have children with no siblings at the start of the line to allow their parents to leave quickly; Elm and Yew Class will be in sibling order to allow parents who are waiting with younger siblings to leave as promptly as possible).

Please maintain social distancing guidelines when waiting for children and do not congregate in small groups. If a teacher or senior leader needs to speak to a parent/carer, they will approach you but this will be kept to a minimal level in order to reduce contact.

Playtime and lunchtime arrangements

When considering the arrangements for play and lunchtimes, we have had to take into consideration not only the guidelines for Covid-19 and weather conditions, but also health and safety factors as we are currently having our new exterior fencing installed. We are absolutely thrilled that this is taking place as plans for it were in place before the first national lockdown in 2020 but were, understandably, put on hold until the time it was deemed safe to be able to start the work.

Our playground has had to temporarily decrease in size due the contractors needing space for skips, cement mixers and diggers! As the fencing is being erected at the boundaries of both fields, we are unable to use the fields for play and lunchtime so we are working with a restricted amount of space at present.

In order to accommodate all of these factors, the classes will be operating as separate bubbles and the following arrangements will be in place for play and lunch times:

Playtime

Elm Class – 10:10am – 10:25am

Yew Class – 10:30am - 10:45am

Ash Class – 10:50am – 11:05am

Lunchtimes

Lunchtime will be a perfectly executed ballet to allow for eating and play to take place fairly across the school! The arrangements for eating are also taking into account arrangements that are in place with Chartwells who provide school lunches.

Ash Class – 11:45 – 12:45

Lunch will be eaten in the school hall. The children will eat lunch first at 11:45, then will go to the playground to play at 12:15. They will then return to class at 12:45.

Elm Class – 11:45 – 12:45

Children will eat in their base classroom, with hot lunches being collected from the hall and served to the children by the staff in class. The children will go on the playground to play first at 11:45, then will return to their classroom to eat lunch at 12:15. They will stay in class to start learning at 12:45.

Yew Class – 12:15 – 13:15

Children will eat in their base classroom with hot lunches being collected from the hall and served to the children by staff in the class. The children will eat lunch first at 12:15, then will go to the playground to play at 12:45. They will return to the class at 13:15.

School lunch provision

From 8th March, the provision for school lunches will return to the normal arrangements prior to lockdown.

ALL Key Stage 1 children (Reception, Years 1 and 2) are eligible for a free school meal through Universal Free School Meals.

Children entitled to Free School Meals, which is a means-tested entitlement, have a meal ordered for them automatically.

For KS2 parents/carers who would like to order school meals for the week beginning 8th March, orders need to be placed **by midnight on Sunday 28th February**. If you are new to ordering school meals, please refer to the school website at this link:

<https://www.st-james-coldwaltham.w-sussex.sch.uk/Parents/Lunches/>

for information how to do this.

Uniform and PE Kit

Children will be expected to wear full school uniform on return to school. To read the school's uniform policy and find details about what children should wear, please visit the school website, following this link:

[St James C of E Primary - Uniform \(st-james-coldwaltham.w-sussex.sch.uk\)](https://www.st-james-coldwaltham.w-sussex.sch.uk)

As a school, we recognise that it may be difficult to be able to shop to buy items of uniform that may need replacing (for example, shoes) due to national lockdown restrictions. If this is the case for you, we would request that your child is wearing clothes that remain **as close to uniform requirements as possible** until national lockdown restrictions are fully lifted with regards to non-essential shops opening.

May we stress that this is not saying non-uniform is acceptable! We are trying to recognise the difficulty that the current situation is presenting but are expecting the children to be dressed as closely to the uniform requirements as possible.

As prior to lockdown, on the days when children have PE, **they will be required to come into school wearing their PE Kit**. Please contact your class teacher to confirm the days when children will have PE.

Breakfast Club and After-School Clubs

Breakfast Club

We are delighted to be able to say that Breakfast Club will still be open from 8th March, as it has been during lockdown. **Breakfast Club will be open from 8:00am and will take place in the Hall; please bring your children to the main school gate where they will be collected.** There will be tables designated for each class in order to maintain bubbles as far as possible.

Please book places at Breakfast Club a week in advance via the School Office and pay via ParentPay. The cost is £2.50 per child; £2.00 for siblings and £5.00 for three children per session.

After-School Clubs

After-School Clubs will **not** start again until after the Spring Break at Easter. Due to the fencing being erected on the field and the playground space being restricted, we do not feel that it is safe to run clubs at this time.

If you require after-school care, Jo Kent runs an After School Club on site at the school each day from 3:15 to 5:45pm. Please follow the link below for more details about this:

<https://www.st-james-coldwaltham.w-sussex.sch.uk/Wrap-Around-Care/>

Personal items and bags

The policy of children not bringing in personal toys, pencil cases or items from home remains unless it has been agreed with the class teacher for a specific reason. Please contact your child's class teacher if there is something that you need to discuss with them and they will consult with Mrs Martin as to whether it is appropriate for an item to be brought in.

Please can Reception and Key Stage 1 children bring **only** their book bags to school in order for reading provision to be maintained. Key Stage 2 children are welcome to bring in books from home that will remain in school until they have finished them.

If your child needs to bring a bag to school for a specific reason (e.g. a change of clothes is needed), please place the items in a small wipeable bag which is cleaned every day after school.

Lunchboxes and water bottles need to be brought into school as usual. All Key Stage 1 children will be provided with a fruit/vegetable snack through the government-funded scheme that is in place but parents/carers are welcome to send a different healthy snack if their children do not eat fruit/vegetables. Key Stage 2 children are welcome to bring in a healthy snack to have at playtime.

Final comments

We are aware that this letter contains a great deal of information but we want to ensure that you feel confident about the arrangements for the full reopening of the school. It is important that you are reassured that we are committed to maintaining our school as a safe, secure and healthy environment for the children to be in.

You may have enquiries that have not been addressed in this letter. If you have any questions or concerns relating to whole school arrangements, please contact Mrs Martin at hos@coldwalthamschool.com; if your question or concern is about a

specific classroom matter, please contact your child's class teacher via the class email.

Please appreciate that we may not answer immediately; this is a very busy period of time as we prepare for the school to reopen. Teachers are still expected to set home learning during the coming week as well as physically prepare classrooms, plan and prepare learning and resources for the return of the children on 8th March. We will respond to you as soon as possible once answers to your questions or concerns have been fully investigated to ensure there is no miscommunication.

The full reopening of schools is a positive step forward as we continue our journey back to normality from Covid-19 as a society. We are very excited to welcome the children back and are looking forward to being able to be with them in class to resume learning in a more normal manner. Working together, we will continue to keep our school community safe and, as always, we are grateful for your support and cooperation with this.

Kind regards,



Mrs Stephanie Gibson, Executive Head, Arun Villages Federation

Mrs Lizzie Martin, Head of School, St. James' CE Primary School