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ANTICIPATED RETURN TO SCHOOL ON MARCH 8th

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this correspondence finds you and your family well. I know many of you will have welcomed the announcement by the Government that all children will return to school on March 8th. This is good news indeed as we really do look forward to welcoming all of our children back to school.

I wanted to write to you to set out our initial plans for reintroducing our children into school. The DfE has stated that **school attendance will be mandatory for all children from Monday 8th March** and that schools will have discretion on how to phase the return of children over that week. We will continue to take a measured approach to ensure that all members of our school community are kept safe.

Our priority across the ATLP and at Brookvale remains the safety and wellbeing of our pupils, our staff and, of course, all of you in our wider community. As such, when we re-open, we will be implementing the guidance, set out by the Government, to continue to mitigate against risk, details of which can be found by following the hyperlink <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Public Health Measures to Reduce Risk

In order to re-open to all year groups in the safest way, the Government and Public Health England have set out a series of measures we should implement. These measures fall into one of two categories; limiting contact between pupils and implementing hygiene measures.

The essential measures we will be implementing include:

- a requirement that people who are ill stay at home;
- robust hand and respiratory hygiene;
- enhanced cleaning arrangements;
- active engagement with NHS Test and Trace;
- immediate closure of year groups where positive cases have been identified;
- formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school, wherever possible, and minimise potential for contamination, so far as is reasonably practicable.

At Brookvale we are planning on reducing contacts in the following ways:

- grouping children together in year group bubbles;
- avoiding contact between different year groups or bubbles;
- arranging Year 3 – Year 6 classrooms with forward facing desks;
- asking staff to maintain distance from pupils not in their bubble and other staff in school as much as possible.



Year Group Bubbles

As you will know, the Government have acknowledged that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to socially distance and therefore primary schools have been asked to reduce contact between children. We are proposing that our year group bubbles start school and finish school at different times, in the same way as they did during the autumn term. This is to limit congestion at the start and end of the day and support social/physical distancing requirements. We are also proposing that children will have staggered playtimes and staggered lunchtime, too. Please see below details of the proposed start and finish times for each of the year group bubbles.

Reception Bubble (Side entrance) Start time: 8.45am Finish time: 3.20pm	
Year 1 Bubble (Year 1 entrance) Start time: 8.35am Finish time: 3.15pm	Year 2 Bubble (Rear entrance) Start time: 8.40am Finish time: 3.20pm
Year 3 Bubble (Front entrance) Start time: 8.40am Finish time: 3.20pm	Year 4 Bubble (Rear entrance) Start time: 8.35am Finish time: 3.15pm
Year 5 Bubble (Front entrance) Start time: 8.45am Finish time: 3.25pm	Year 6 Bubble (Rear entrance) Start time: 8.45am Finish time: 3.25pm

We would kindly ask that when your child returns to school in March that you follow the timings strictly and are punctual each day to minimise risk of children and families from different bubbles meeting.

As an additional measure to help safeguard our community, we are asking all adults, who are not medically exempt, to wear a face mask when on site at all times. Staff on duty will ask any adult who is not wearing a face mask to be considerate of the health and safety of the children and wider community. We appreciate the support of our families who in the autumn term consistently wore face masks whilst on site.

Reception

Children and parents will enter through front entrance on Mallard Drive and follow the path to the main Reception classroom door, located to the side of the school building. Parents will need to hand over their children into the care of staff and will not be allowed to enter the Reception classroom.

Year 1 and Year 2

Children and parents will enter through the back playground gate and will follow path markers up to a specified point - 3 metre distance from the back entrance. Year 1/Year 2 staff will accompany children into the building, where all children will be required to use hand sanitiser on entry. All parents/carers must exit the site using the back playground gate.

Year 4 and Year 6

For children in Year 4 and Year 6, we kindly ask that you drop your child off at the back playground entrance and ensure your child enters the school grounds. The fewer parents we have on site at any one time, the safer it will be for our children, staff and wider community. Year 4 and Year 6 children should enter school using the back door and use the back staircase to access their classrooms. All children will be required to use hand sanitiser on entry.



Year 3 and Year 5

For children in Year 3 and Year 5, we kindly ask that you drop your child off at the front gate entrance on Mallard Drive and wait until your child enters the school building. The fewer parents we have on site at any one time, the safer it will be for our children, staff and wider community. Year 3 and Year 5 children should enter school using main entrance door and will then use the front staircase to access their classrooms. All children will be required to use hand sanitiser on entry.

Curriculum Provision

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of our parents, families and children who have engaged consistently with home learning during the period of school closures. This, I have no doubt, will have significantly reduced the impact of school closures on children's learning and progress.

As we return to school in March, many of our children will have been out of school for a little over 7 months, as a result of both lockdowns. As such, our curriculum will need to be responsive and precisely focused to address gaps in learning. Our curriculum delivery will be underpinned by five core principles:

- strong, purposeful teaching that maximises learning time;
- use of robust assessment materials to identify and address gaps in learning;
- well-planned, targeted schemes of work supported by excellent assessment for learning;
- targeted and bespoke intervention;
- focussed welfare and pastoral systems to support behaviour and routines.

We remain committed to ensuring our children flourish socially, emotionally and academically through well-taught, progressive curriculum content. We understand that children make good progress across the curriculum and in individual subject disciplines when we build on what they already know and what they can already do. As we recover from the prolonged absence, we will ensure that children continue to get a broad and balanced curriculum offer but will prioritise core areas of the curriculum, specifically reading, writing and maths.

In addition to our standard curriculum offer, we will be introducing daily interventions for phonics, reading and arithmetic. All children in Key Stage 2 will also begin a programme of intervention, using an online platform (Reading Plus), to improve fluency and comprehension.

We ask that you continue to support your children at home with weekly homework and daily reading as this will be essential for their future progress.

Lunchtimes

Our school kitchen will reopen from March 8th and normal legal requirements will apply about provision of food to all pupils who want it, including for those eligible for benefits-related free school meals or universal infant free school meals. Our school kitchen will comply with the guidance for food businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19).

We strongly encourage that children access a hot meal each day and would prefer all children in Key Stage One to take up the offer of a hot lunch as this is free of charge to parents. Please contact the office if you do not wish for your child to have a free, hot lunch so we can discuss this with you.

A rota system will be in place so that all children can use the dining hall, with additional stringent cleaning protocols between sittings.

Similarly, a rota system will be in place for outdoor breaktimes so that children do not come into contact with other bubbles.

Mid-morning snacks for KS2 children can be purchased for the term using SchoolMoney.



Visitors to School

Of course we will ensure on our return to school in March that appropriate support is made available for pupils with SEND, and this will mean welcoming external professionals to school on some occasions. However, visitors will only be permitted to Brookvale on an appointment basis. All visitors will then report to the main entrance where the usual safeguarding procedures will be carried out. We will be limiting visitors to school to those only absolutely necessary. Parents should come into school buildings only when strictly necessary and must make an appointment.

Breakfast Club and Extra-Curricular Activities

As per Government guidance, Breakfast Club will re-open from 8th March and will continue to operate from the school hall to allow appropriate distancing of children. Parents must book at least one-week in advance of their sessions as no other children will be accepted on a day-to-day basis. This is to protect the integrity of the Breakfast Club Bubble, again, minimising contact between children. We will also be launching a free after-school trampoline club for two year groups – more details to follow.

Attendance

When children return to school in March we kindly ask that they return wearing their full school uniform. The usual rules on school attendance will apply including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- parents' duty to inform school on the first day of absence the reason for the absence; this is all the more important in the current climate;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence.

We would ask that you do not send your child to school if they become poorly especially if they or a member of their household has symptoms of the coronavirus.

Please note, due to the significant amount of time that children have missed in school, we will be working closely with the local authority to identify families where attendance is/has been a concern. **Holidays during term time will not be authorised under any circumstance and we kindly ask that you prioritise your child's education.** Unauthorised holiday absences during the term will be referred to the local authority, which can result in fines being issued.

Equipment in School

We kindly ask that you limit the amount of equipment your child brings into school each day to the absolute essentials, such as lunch boxes, sunhats, coats, books etc. P.E. kits should be taken home after each session and washed. Stationery will be provided for all children as **children will not be allowed to bring pencil cases into school.**

Please be assured that our number one priority remains the children's well-being. We appreciate that the coronavirus outbreak may have caused significant wellbeing difficulties for some children and we want to be able to support them on their return to school. Their assigned teaching staff are committed to doing this. If your child is worried about coming back to school, you could;

- talk to your child in a positive way about school, seeing friends and teachers again;
- help them to understand how social distancing works and make sure they can wash their hands properly themselves;
- let them know that school may seem a bit different, but their teachers are doing everything to make sure that it is safe.



Uniform

Children should be in full correct uniform on return in March (see previous uniform letters) and this should be cleaned regularly. P.E. Kits should only be brought into school on the day of your child's P.E. lesson and taken home at the end of the school day for washing. A timetable for P.E. lessons will be communicated out next week.

If for whatever reason you cannot send your child into school in their full uniform, please contact the school office.

If you have any questions about what will be happening for your child when they return to school, then please do not hesitate to contact us at office@brkvale.bham.sch.uk

In the meantime, I send you all our very warmest best wishes and we look forward to welcoming back our children very soon.

Yours Sincerely



Mr Stuart Day

Head Teacher

