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'Partnership in Learning'

Dear Parents,

As always, it was lovely to welcome the children back to school on Monday. We hope that you and your loved ones all had the best half terms possible in the circumstances.

Thank you for your patience waiting for this update following the Governments' announcement of 'Lockdown 2.0' last Saturday.

We had most of this information ready to send yesterday as planned but the Government released their additional Guidance to schools at the 11th hour so we needed to take some more time to ensure that everything contained within is as up to date as possible, which it now is.

Main Headlines for the Next 4 Weeks

- 1) School will remain open (subject to the 'bubble closure' process outlined below)
- 2) Breakfast and Stay/Play Club will continue to run as planned
- 3) Timings of the day for year groups will continue 'as are'
- 4) Should your child not be able to attend school for a COVID compliance reason (see below) work will be provided via Google Classroom

Communication

Whole School

In order to enable us to keep you as up to date as possible throughout the 'lockdown' period, I will be re-starting our weekly lockdown bulletin from **Friday 13th November**. These will be emailed out towards the end of the day as before. Please do take the time to read them, as they will be our main way of keeping you informed.

With Teachers

Teachers will not be available for 'face to face' meetings for the foreseeable future. However, if you need to pass a message or speak to them they are still available and want to continue to have that dialogue with you. Your options are:

- Send an email to the Year Group Gmail account (e.g. yearfourljs@gmail.com)
- Phone the office to request a call back

Please keep in mind that the Gmail account is only checked during office hours and that the teachers are involved in teaching all day so responses, whilst not immediate, will be provided as soon as is possible.

Any Other

All other meetings will continue to take place over the telephone or via Google Meets as most appropriate.

Arrangements for Drop off/Collection

These will remain largely unchanged. Timings of the day will continue to run as they have been since September. The eating/play pattern at lunchtimes (i.e. which year group eats first and which plays first) changes half termly.

Year Groups	Start	Finish	Entry/Exit Point	Playground	Morning Playtime	Lunchtime (Eating)	Lunchtime (Playing)	Afternoon Playtime
Year 4	8:30	15:00	Front Gate	Front	10:05 – 10:20	12:00 – 12:20	12:20 – 12:40	13:55 – 14:10
Year 6	8:30	15:00	Field Gate	Back	10:05 – 10:20	12:00 – 12:20	12:20 – 12:40	13:55 – 14:10
Year 3	8:45	15:15	Front Gate	Front	10:25 – 10:40	12:20 – 12:40	12:00 – 12:20	14:15 – 14:30
Year 5	8:45	15:15	Field Gate	Back	10:25 – 10:40	12:20 – 12:40	12:00 – 12:20	14:15 – 14:30

Children will continue to enter/leave the school site (i.e. the area behind the school's security fences) using the gates they have until now.

Important reminders for this time of the day:

- all children remain the responsibility of their parents until they have come through the school gates. Appropriate supervision is required.
- due to the number of entrance points in operation, the shared site (i.e. that used by the Infants and the Juniors) will remain for pedestrians only.
- please follow the one way system in operation within the car park.
- please avoid loitering and/or forming groups. Social distancing should be observed at all times.
- the wearing of masks while outside, in areas in which social distancing can be observed, is not compulsory. If you wish to wear a mask at these times, however, you are obviously free to do so. (*For clarification:* the Infant School are only insisting on masks being worn when parents enter on to their playground via the wooden gate near their pond area. This is a unique requirement for access on to their school site due to the 'pinch points' inadvertently caused there. Junior School parents do not need to enter on to our playground or go through any 'pinch points' and therefore this arrangement is not necessary.).
- as it is indoors, however, anyone over the age of 11 will need to wear a mask when in the school office area. If you are unable to wear a mask for a clinical reason, please notify the office staff before arriving.

Attendance

As far as we know, attendance at school during the 'lockdown' period remains compulsory all the time the school is open unless:

- Your child is unable to attend for reasons that would usually prevent them from doing so (e.g. illness/injury)
- Your child can not attend for COVID compliance reasons (i.e. 'enforced' self-isolation)

Attendance will continue to be monitored, and followed up, by staff in the usual ways. As such, please ensure that you notify us by 10:00am (this can be by phone or email:adminoffice@lymington-jun.hants.sch.uk) if your child is unable to attend school for any reason on the first day of their

absence. In all cases staff will be able to explain the subsequent process depending on the specific circumstances.

How are we keeping the children safe..?

We will continue to follow the systems and procedures that we have embedded and refined since September. These include:

- Minimising contact between children (and staff) as much as is reasonably practical
- Ensuring frequent (at least 6 times a day) hand sanitising and/or washing
- Enhanced general cleaning of the school and materials therein
- Significantly reducing the numbers of visitors allowed on to the school's premises (***this is one of the reasons why we are not running extra-curricular clubs***)
- Only allowing people (children or adults) on to the premises if they are symptom-free
- Following advice from Public Health England in the event of a confirmed case (see below)

What happens if there is a confirmed case on the school premises..?

We have been very fortunate that this has not happened in our school yet. It has, however, happened in many other New Forest Schools, including a number attended by children of staff. As a result, we are familiar with the process.

In short, if any of the children test positive (something which due to a combination of increasing case numbers and potentially more easily accessible tests is increasingly likely) we contact Public Health England (PHE) and follow their advice. Currently that tends to be for all children and staff learning/working in the class to self isolate for 14 days from the point of the last contact.

In the event of a member of staff testing positive, we would once again contact PHE and take the steps which they tell us to. These currently include sending home any class that the adult has worked with up to 48 hours before the positive test.

As you can see, there is significant potential for just 1 positive case (from circa 300 children and staff) to result in large parts of the school being forced to close. This has 2 consequences that are important for everyone to be aware of:

1) You need to have a short notice (when PHE decide, bubbles close with immediate effect) 'back up plan' for your child to be home for up to 14 days. This is currently the situation whether we are in lockdown or not.

2) Every decision currently being taken by the school is designed to minimise the impact of 1 case, in terms of numbers of bubbles and/or staff that would need to isolate, by reducing contact points as much as we can. Our aim is for 1 positive case to only affect 1 bubble where possible. The thinking here is that our number one priority is to keep as many children in school as possible, for as long as possible. This is why (a) we have to restrict the games played by children at playtime and (b) we will not be running after school clubs for the foreseeable future.

Impact on Extra-curricular Clubs Explained

In order to minimise the impact of a limited numbers of cases on a large number of children being able to come to school, as outlined above, we are going to be unable to run extra-curricular clubs for the foreseeable future. This is because:

- 1) If teachers work with children other than those in their classroom, they risk having to isolate in the event of a case elsewhere in the school (if the child is in their club) and therefore their class (who will not otherwise be affected) would be without their teacher for 2 weeks.
- 2) We cannot allow children to do 'vigorous exercise' indoors. This impacts sports-based clubs in the hall.
- 3) We cannot run clubs that involve children from different year groups (there are different expectations for before/after school childcare – in our setting this is why 'Stay and Play' can continue in the format it has been running) without risking one case impacting on the adults/children across all of those year groups.

This is not a decision we have taken lightly, or indeed one we would have taken at all had the current circumstances not forced it upon us, but on balance we feel keeping as many of the 256 children in school for as much of the term as possible is more important than enabling a club provision for many less than that to access.

We recognise that other schools will have come to a different conclusion around this topic, and that not everyone will agree with our 'least worst' decision, we do hope however that everyone can understand why it has been made.

As soon as we are able to without risking significant disruption to the majority of children in the school, we will re-establish this provision.

Stay and Play

The Government have built in an exemption for childcare provision which means that we can continue to run Stay and Play in the way we have until now, including the necessity for parents to have responsibility for escorting their children to/from the Stay and Play entrance. As this will bring parents within the school gate/to a potential 'pinch points' **masks will need to be worn** by anyone over the age of 11.

What happens if my child's class has to self-isolate...?

Communication

We will be issued with notification letters by Public Health England. There will be a specific notification sent to the affected class explaining the actions needed and a general letter to the rest of the school. These will be sent as soon as we possibly can following instruction from PHE to do so.

It is important to note:

- i) that for Data Protection reasons the school can not release the names of the individuals involved
- ii) unless they are directly affected by the positive case for some reason, siblings in other classes are usually still allowed to come to school
- iii) because of the systems outlined above, we should (hopefully!) only have to close a limited number of classes. If your child's class is unaffected, even if it is part of the same year group, it will be because they have not come in to 'close contact' with the case as defined by Public Health England.

Remote Learning

As mentioned above, if your child is unable to attend school for COVID compliance reasons (i.e. self-isolation due to vulnerability or for 'track and trace' purposes or should a class bubble(s) have to close for 2 weeks, remote learning will be provided.

Due to our experience during lockdown (including feedback from parents), and the Government finally establishing National guidelines in this area, we have been able to move on to the front foot in terms of what this will look like.

Learning will be provided via the Google classroom system. This will take the format of:

- A virtually presented English and Maths lesson.
- An afternoon 'workshop' in which the teacher will address any problems that have arisen during the English and Maths lesson. (To make this more targeted, the teachers will ask for questions/problems to be emailed in at least 45 minutes before the scheduled workshop. These will then be addressed during the workshop).
- A virtually presented 'afternoon session' (i.e. a subject other than English and Maths).

What we have learnt from Lockdown 1:

- Google Classroom makes it difficult to access Powerpoint presentations with embedded sound
- Google classroom makes it challenging to upload/download worksheets in formats that can be edited.
- Children need an opportunity to 'unpick' issues in independent work
- In families with more than one child, children often need to share laptops

How we will address this:

- Lessons presentation will be filmed and uploaded as a 'playback' file that is compatible with Google Classroom. This means that (i) Teachers can use any software package they need to illustrate the learning to children and (ii) Children can listen to (and see) their teacher giving them all the instruction they need for each session.
- Teachers will embed the task instructions within the video lessons outlined above. Children just need to pause the video at the correct place and work from the instructions. We will provide every child with a book to work in.
- Teachers will hold the afternoon 'workshop sessions' to address any specific challenges children encountered during the English and Maths sessions. These will be 'live' sessions to enable them to be as responsive as possible but also recorded (see next).
- All lessons will be uploaded as recorded files so that they can be watched by children at their own pace and also during a time slot that is convenient to them/the family. The 'live' workshops will also be recorded and posted to Google Classroom afterwards so that they can be (i) watched again if necessary or (ii) watched at a different time if on a shared laptop. We would recommend that if there is a time clash involving siblings that the child who had most challenges within the lesson watches the live version and vice versa.

What we need parents to do:

- Make sure you know how to log in to your child's Google Classroom account
- Let the staff know if you have no access to an internet enabled device (another benefit of moving to filmed material and a book is that it does not require a laptop, a smartphone would be enough) and they will arrange collection of a hard copy alternative. Please be aware that for obvious and unavoidable reasons this can not be made to be as interactive as the virtual provision but the staff will do the best they can in the circumstances.

Logistical challenges to be aware of:

- In the event of a whole class having to isolate, provision of remote learning is logistically easiest for us to manage as the teacher only has to focus on that.
- In the event of a small number of children (e.g. one or two per class) isolating their class teacher still needs to teach the other 30 children, with all that entails, as well as facilitate remote learning for the one or two children isolating. In this case, the teacher will phone the affected family as soon after the school have been notified of the start of the self-isolation period as possible to discuss the most sensible way forward.

General Reminders

Warm Clothing

We are trying to ensure that there is as much ventilation as possible in classrooms. This will continue throughout the winter months. We would encourage children wearing a base layer (or equivalent) under their uniform as the downside of the increased ventilation is that school may feel cold. Children (and staff!) will, of course, be allowed to wear coats etc in class should the need arise.

Limited Equipment

Due to their close proximity to each other, we continue not to use the locker areas. As such, the children have to 'stow' all of their belongings under their tables/on the back of their chairs. Please limit the equipment brought in from home to: one small bag if required; lunch book if needed; water bottle; coat.

PE days

Remember to send your child in to school on their PE days dressed appropriately for PE. Please bear in mind that these lessons will be outside so the children need to be as warm as possible (we are happy for this to include base layers; gloves; hoodies etc as necessary). Their days are:

Year 3: Tuesday

Year 4: Wednesday

Year 5: Thursday

Year 6: Friday

Regular use of School Field

We will be using the field for play and/or PE as much as possible throughout the winter. Please bear with us if your child comes home muddier than usual.

Up to date Contacts

Please ensure that the office has the most up to date contact information for you and your child. If you have recently moved house; changed telephone numbers or email address, please let the office staff know asap.

Parking Near the School

When parking in the roads by the school, please ensure that this is done in a safe and responsible fashion. We have recently been informed by residents of Oberland Court of incidents of reckless parking corresponding with school pick up/drop off times. Thank you to everyone for parking in a considerate way.

In summary

We appreciate the patience, support and understanding of all members of our school community as we continue to attempt to chart a path through these uncertain times. Please continue to read communications sent by the school thoroughly as these will outline any changes to provision as the 'lockdown' period progresses.

Unfortunately, we can not guarantee that we will always make the same decisions as other schools over the coming weeks or that those we make you will always agree with. We can, however, guarantee that whatever conclusions we reach will be solely guided by these over-arching aims:

- 1) To keep children and staff as safe as possible
- 2) To minimise the likelihood of bubbles having to close wherever possible

Keep safe; stay strong and remember that we will be back to 'normal' eventually.

With best wishes,

Dan Twyman
Headteacher