

# *Bodsham Church of England Primary School*

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Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Returning to School in September**

At the end of last term, I promised to write to you in August to set out the way the school will operate this Autumn. Schools received new Covid-19 operational guidance from the Department for Education in July and I'm pleased to say that this has not changed over the summer holiday period, so we now have some confidence in how to proceed!

Now that the country has reached Step 4 of the government's road map towards easing of restrictions, schools are being told to reduce disruption to children's education as much as possible. The most significant change being that the NHS will take over responsibility for contact tracing among school children and we are no longer required to keep the children in separate 'bubbles'.

This means that, for the first time since March 2020, our school will be able to operate in a way that closely resembles the way things were before the pandemic. We will be able to allow children to mix at play and lunchtimes, and we will be able to hold whole school assemblies again.

However, some precautions will stay in place with a view to minimising risk. We will also take this opportunity to refine and improve some routines to take advantage of the new situation.

## **How will we reduce the risk to children and families from September 2021?**

We will continue to maintain regular handwashing and enhanced respiratory hygiene procedures. We will continue to ventilate classrooms and common areas as much as possible. Our cleaning regime will remain at an enhanced level. All staff will be asked to engage in twice weekly lateral flow testing.

Children who display symptoms of Covid-19 while at school will be isolated and sent home. Parents will be asked to obtain a PCR test for their child. Children should not be sent to school if they are displaying any Covid-19 symptoms. Members of the child's household will not be required to self-isolate if they have been fully vaccinated, or are below the age of 18 years and 6 months.

Since 18<sup>th</sup> July, schools have not been required to undertake contact tracing if a case of Covid-19 is identified within the school community. Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace. There will no longer be a need to automatically send an entire class of children into self-isolation should a positive case be identified. We will work closely with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. In these circumstances, schools are required to have an 'outbreak management plan' which sets out measures that can be put into place should a number of cases be identified in the same setting.

At Bodsham, our outbreak management plan will involve a quick return to the system of bubbles and the reintroduction of other measures set out in the Risk Assessment we produced last year. This means parents should be prepared for the situation to change quite rapidly. Parents are also asked to fully engage in the Test and Trace system and seek PCR tests when requested.

## **When will school start?**

All children are expected to start the school year on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Children can arrive at school at any time between 8.40am and 8.50am, after which time the gate will be locked and any late arrivals should come to the school office. Children can still be dropped off at the top of the drive if you wish and a staff member will guide them to the playground.

Children should make their way onto the playground and enter the building via the usual playground door. A member of staff will be present to greet them. Parents are asked not to come onto the playground unless there is a specific need to accompany their child. There is no longer a requirement for parents to wear a face covering while on site, but please consider others and maintain social distance.

Our new Reception Class will also start school in the newly named **Sparrows Class** on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September. They will attend for three half days until Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September, when they will begin full days. Children in the Sparrows Class should enter their Reception Class area via the alleyway next to the Art Studio. During the three half days, parents should collect children from the Sparrows class at the same place at 1pm each day.

## **When will school finish?**

We are making a small change to the end times of the school day to try and reduce crowding at home time.

**Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 (Sparrows and Robins) should be collected at 3.20pm**  
**Children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Woodpeckers and Owls) should be collected at 3.30pm**

If you have children in both these groups, please arrive at 3.30pm. Children will line up on the playground and be sent to their adults as you arrive. There is no need to queue while collecting children, but please continue to recognise social distancing and leave the school site as quickly as possible.

## **What will the children need to bring?**

Children will only need to bring a named water bottle, lunchbox, their reading book and reading record to school each day in a named book bag. All stationery will be provided by us.

PE kits should be worn to school on PE days, which are:

**Sparrows – Tuesday & Wednesday**

**Robins – Tuesday & Friday**

**Woodpeckers – Monday & Thursday**

**Owls – Monday & Friday**

## School Meals

Children will eat lunch in two sittings and will then be able to play together outside. Parents can pay for school meals via Caterlink's online booking system as previously or send in a packed lunch. All children in Years R, 1 and 2 are entitled to a free school meal, which are ordered by the children at the start of each day, if they are not having packed lunch.

Children in Year R, 1 and 2 will receive a fruit snack provided by the school. Free milk will be provided until children reach their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, and can be purchased via Coolmilk thereafter.

Children in Years 3-6 can bring in fruit or a vegetable snack (nothing processed) to eat at playtime if they so wish.

## Will school uniform be worn?

Please ensure children are wearing the full [Bodsham school uniform](#), which includes a badged sweatshirt or cardigan with the school logo. PE kit must include the white t-shirt with Bodsham logo. Full details can be found on our uniform web page. Please note **that trainers should only be worn on PE days** and black school shoes must be worn on every other day. Please make sure your child has access to pair of wellingtons, which can be left at school. Please clearly mark all items of uniform with your child's name.

## Will breakfast and after school clubs be running?

Yes, breakfast club will run from 8am each day. Please bring children to the hall door as usual. Booking can be made via the school office [admin@bodsham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:admin@bodsham.kent.sch.uk) or 01233 750374.

On Monday and Tuesday, after school multi sports club will be run by Elite Community Coaching – bookings can be made via [Elite's website](#).

On Wednesday and Thursday, after school club will be run by Badgers Bridge Nursery – bookings can be made via email: [badgersafterschoolclubbodsham@gmail.com](mailto:badgersafterschoolclubbodsham@gmail.com)

## Staffing Updates

Miss Skinner is currently recovering well from her operation. Mrs Joanna Rock will be teaching the Woodpeckers for the first term of this year, with Mrs Selby on Fridays.

I am also pleased to be welcoming Mrs Bannister to the teaching team. She will be joining the Robins Class as their teaching assistant.

## Keeping Parents Fully Involved

At Bodsham, we are proud of the excellent relationship we have with our parents. As restrictions are eased, we aim to find ways to communicate with parents that minimise risk but still keep you fully informed. At the start of the new term in September, we will publish an 'orientation' video from each class teacher, which will set out what you need to know about your child's class. There will also be a newsletter with curriculum information for you.

Parents of our new Reception children will be invited into demonstration sessions to explain how we teach reading and phonics, so that you can support these vital areas of learning at home.

Later in the term we hope to be able to invite parents into school for a 'Drop in Zone' to view the work the children have completed so far in the year. We will then offer all parents individual consultations with teachers at a parent's evening at the end of the first term. I will be consulting you to ask if parents would prefer these meetings to be in person or over Zoom, given the success of Zoom meetings last year.

### **What will happen if there is a resurgence of Coronavirus in the future?**

Schools are being asked to prepare robust plans to allow them to quickly revert to class bubbles or home learning should the need arise. We are committed to ensure that any child unable to attend school due to Covid-19 can quickly switch to home learning using our Seesaw platform. Our school will work closely with local health protection teams at all times and will act on their advice and guidance.

We are all really excited at the thought of this return to a much more 'normal' way of schooling. However, we are fully aware that case numbers remain high and there is a need for us all to be vigilant. We will always consider Covid security in context of the prevailing local conditions when planning curriculum and other events during the year.

I hope you enjoy the remaining week of the summer holiday and am looking forward to see you all again on 6<sup>th</sup> September!

Kind Regards



Paul Newton

**Executive Head Teacher**