



# Blanford Mere Nursery and Primary School

Mimosa Walk, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 7EA

Headteacher: Mrs N.J. Miller Tel: 01384 818365 Email: info@blanford.dudley.sch.uk

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you are aware, on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July, the Government moved to step 4 of their roadmap after a very difficult period of time for the whole country, since March 2020. This marked a new phase in the government's response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone's day to day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk, as Covid 19 becomes a virus that we all need to learn to live with. The government's plan is that it is imperative to reduce the disruption to children's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult has had the opportunity of receiving a vaccine. **'School attendance is mandatory, therefore the usual rules on school attendance will apply.'**

Currently, schools have been issued with guidance and asked to put into place proportionate control measures for their school. However, September is still seven weeks away, so plans for September are subject to change. You may be aware from the media that the number of cases of Covid 19 are increasing quickly across the country, and could be subject to measures being stepped up again. Assuming this does not happen, or that further restrictions are not imposed, the plans below will take effect from September.

Our priority remains the safety and wellbeing of children and their families, as well as that of the staff and their families.

To fulfil this guidance on health and safety, there are measures that we have taken and would like your support with - these will be reviewed regularly.

Initially, we will be establishing new routines and boundaries, as well as helping children to adjust to the changes in school.

**We have received the following advice from the DfE:**

### **Public health advice**

*We have worked closely with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Public Health England (PHE) to develop this guidance. Based on the recent [ONS data](#), the risks to education staff are similar to those for most other occupations.*

*Implementing the [system of controls](#), creates a safer environment for pupils and staff where the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced. The way to control this virus is the same, even with the current new variants. Working with PHE, we continually review the measures, which are informed by the latest scientific evidence and advice and update our guidance accordingly.*

*You must comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures. To meet these obligations you must:*

- *review health and safety risk assessments in light of this refreshed guidance*
- *make any necessary changes to your control measures applying the [system of controls](#)*



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## Government guidance

Please click on the link below for the full guidance.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1002322/Schools\\_guidance\\_Step\\_4\\_update\\_for\\_14\\_July.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1002322/Schools_guidance_Step_4_update_for_14_July.pdf)

Here are some of the key messages from the document.

- **Mixing and 'bubbles'**  
At Step 4 we will no longer recommend that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). You should make sure your outbreak management plans cover the possibility that in some local areas it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.
- **Tracing close contacts and isolation**  
From Step 4, close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. You may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases. From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.
- **Stepping measures up and down**  
You should have outbreak management plans outlining how you would operate if there were an outbreak in your school or local area. Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education can have on children and young people, any measures in schools should only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of schools or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible. Central government may offer local areas of particular concern an enhanced response package to help limit increases in transmission. The government will review its approach for enhanced response in local areas before Step 4.
- **Control measures**  
You should:
  1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
  2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
  3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
  4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- **Admitting children into school**  
**In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a pupil with symptoms should not attend the school, given the potential risk to others. If a parent or carer insists on a pupil attending your school, you can take the decision to refuse the pupil if, in your reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19. Your**



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decision would need to be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

- **Remote education**

You should maintain your capacity to deliver high quality remote education for next academic year.

**This is how we are applying the guidance at Blanford Mere Primary**, as it is up to individual schools to put in measures they wish to for their setting.

## Groupings

- Children will be grouped into classes and maths/spelling groups (KS2 only) and may mix with other pupils in the playground and dining hall.
- Children will be seated in groups or rows - this will be up to individual staff members.
- Assemblies will be reintroduced in year groups initially (no parents invited initially) this will be reviewed after the first half term. There will be no whole school assemblies to begin with.
- Lunch sittings will be held in the hall;
- Children will be taking part in P.E. using equipment again - this will mainly be outdoors if weather permits.

## Lunch arrangements

- Meals continue to be free of charge for all children in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 as well as any child who is eligible for benefit-related free school meals. We will still be asking parents to pre-order their child's meal, even though there is no charge.
- Children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 should take up their Universal Free School Meal. **Please try not send them with a packed lunch.**
- KS2 children can bring lunchboxes to school, or order a meal online through the School Grid system.
- The dining hall will continue to be used for phase groups to eat their lunch, and will be cleaned in between sittings.

## Arriving at and leaving school

- We have had very positive feedback from parents regarding the staggered start and finish times for children this year, they have said that the pathway along the park side is less congested and the road leaving the estate is quicker to exit. Therefore, Governors have approved this a measure and we will continue with staggered starts and finish times in September.
- Initially, we will continue the no entry to the site for parents/carers, including the Reception/Nursery parents - children this year have adapted to this extremely well. We will review this over the autumn term.
- Parents will be expected to leave pupils at the perimeter gates where staff will be stationed, except for parents of Nursery who should bring their child to the Nursery entrance.
- Different classes will be given a specific time to arrive or be collected - these times will need to be followed please.



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Timings will be as follows, with all pupils expected to attend school on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Gate</u>	<u>Arrival time</u>	<u>Collection time</u>
Nursery	Nursery Door	8.30am (AM) 12.10pm (PM)	11.30am Am only 3.10pm
Reception Miss Cleeton	Reception gate (Earlswood Road)	8.45am	3.10pm
Reception Miss Postings	Reception gate (Earlswood Road)	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 1 Miss Jordan	KS1 gate	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 1 Mrs Cartwright	KS1 gate	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 2 Mr Wade	KS1 gate	8.45am	3.10pm
Year 2 Miss Barclay	KS1 gate	8.45am	3.10pm
Year 3/4 Mrs Cameron	KS2 gate	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 3/4 Mrs Oliver	KS2 gate	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 3/4 Mrs Morton	KS2 gate	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 5/6 Mr Baker	After School Club gate (middle gate)	8.45am	3.10pm
Year 5/6 Mr Raybould	After School Club gate (middle gate)	8.45am	3.10pm
Year 5/6 Miss Dorricott	After School Club gate (middle gate)	8.45am	3.10pm

## What should my child bring to school?

- The School Uniform policy will take effect fully from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September and pupils will be expected to wear uniform. This means that children not correctly dressed may result in moving to orange on our behaviour chart - we are trying to maintain high standards and expectations for all. Summer uniform is permitted until October half term. **School shoes must be worn - not trainers.** We advise all pupils to bring a jumper/cardigan, regardless of the weather, rooms will still be ventilated.
- Children should only bring a **filled water** bottle (not squash - see healthy tuck policy on the website). This needs to be named please so that children can easily recognise their own bottle and do not touch or drink out of bottles belonging to other children.
- Please **do NOT** send your child with pencil cases and stationery;
- **Bags are allowed but as a school we would strongly advise KS2 pupils NOT to bring large backpacks.** There is insufficient room in cloakrooms to store bags, and this is often the thing pupils moan about most. **Children need a small bag to carry items to and from school, so a drawstring bag like a P.E. bag would be much more suitable; KS1 should only bring their red book bag to school**
- It will be vital for the children to bring their P.E. bags into school on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021



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- Children from Year 1 - Year 6 should bring a small clear labelled 'sandwich bag' with their own labelled pack of tissues, small hand gel/sanitiser for their own use. Children in KS2 should also bring a piece of fruit for break (**No crisps or chocolate please.**)
- Children should not bring any money to school, as all lunches will be paid for online. There is nothing to purchase in school.

## Health and Hygiene

- Health and hygiene will continue to be a priority and a large amount of time will be taken with hygiene and safe use of the facilities. Children will wash hands or use their hand sanitiser frequently - as they arrive at school, after breaks, before and after lunch and at other regular intervals.
- The classroom will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of every day.
- Equipment and resources are integral to education in schools. Classroom based resources, such as books and games, can be used and shared within the classroom.
- Outdoor playground equipment will begin to be used again, so children are active.
- Children can wear their own clothes when it is their birthday.
- **Children will not be allowed to wear masks or gloves in school.** If parents want their child to come/go in masks, they must remove it before the child enters school and the parent must keep the mask for them.

## Breakfast Club (BC) and After School Childcare (ASC) clubs

Breakfast Club and After School Childcare clubs will recommence on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021. We have very limited availability for a place. If you know that you require a place for September and have not yet confirmed this with Mrs Barlow (BC) or Miss Foxall (ASC), please do so as soon as possible by calling 01384 818365. This will be a first come first served basis. The guidance that we have outlined above will be followed and applied in these clubs.

## After school sports clubs

Initially, we will operate two extra-curricular clubs. More details to follow.

## Curriculum

### Pupil wellbeing and support

- Pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. We will have a greater emphasis on:
  - supporting the rebuilding of friendships and social engagement
  - addressing and equipping pupils to respond to issues linked to coronavirus (COVID-19)
  - supporting pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

All staff have had the opportunity to handover valuable information to new teachers regarding your child. This information is used so that we can get off to a swift start in September.



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## The wider curriculum.

- We will continue to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, whilst putting into place bespoke interventions to support pupils. All subjects can resume fully including Gym, dance and singing.

## How can parents help?

After a very turbulent 18 months, we want to continue to make school as safe as possible and to make the school day a positive experience for all children. We would really appreciate your help in the following ways:

- By making sure that you have read and noted the guidance in this letter. We know that there is a lot to take in but we are trying our best to follow the guidance and keep our children and staff as safe as we possibly can.
- Following our altered routines when dropping off/collecting your child - we're sure that you are experts at this by now! We will indicate the areas for parents to wait but **would appreciate you keeping your child with you whilst waiting for the doors to open.**
- Making sure that children only bring into school the items that we have asked for and nothing else.
- It would be helpful if you could leave the waiting area as soon as your child has gone into school or been collected.
- **There will be staggered arrival and collection times from the same entrances, however, this will only work if parents leave the areas swiftly.**
- Initially, contact will need to continue to be via telephone or via your child's planner - this will be reviewed.
- By collecting your child as quickly as possible if your child shows any signs of infection.
- By being flexible. This may have to change to ensure the safety and welfare of children and staff.
- Send your child to school everyday

## Contingency plans for outbreaks

We have remote education plans in place. These should meet the same expectations as those for any pupils who cannot yet attend school at all due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

We have tried our very best to eliminate risk and will be publishing an updated Risk Assessment on the website prior to reopening in September. We have followed the government guidance that has been published at the current time and shared this with staff. However, our plans will only work if everyone - staff, children and parents - follow the plans that have been created.

We hope that you will take time to read and digest this information that we have provided. We know that you will support us with our plan for school from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 for all children.

This term will be a tentative time for all, as restrictions will have been eliminated, but we still wish to put in some precautions to keep the whole school community as safe as possible. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to welcoming everybody back to school on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September.



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Have a wonderful weekend.

Best wishes,

Mrs N Miller and Miss A Stanton

Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher





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