



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 10th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you and your families remain well. We are really excited to be welcoming your children to school in September whether they are returning to us or beginning life at Blanford Mere. The government's plan is that all pupils, in all year groups, will return to school full time from the beginning of the autumn term. *'School attendance will be mandatory again from September 2020, therefore the usual rules on school attendance will apply.'*

However, September is still seven weeks away, so plans for a full opening in September are subject to change. You may be aware from the media that a number of areas of the country, including Dudley and Wolverhampton, are currently 'hotspots' and could be subject to local lockdowns. Assuming the 'R' remains at 1 or below, and there are no local or national lockdowns, or further restrictions imposed, the plans below will take effect from September.

Routines in school will be very different from when all pupils were last here in March 2020 - there will also be differences from the way that school has been operating for the children who have attended during the summer term.

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

We know that many children will be excited at the prospect of returning to school, that they are looking forward to seeing their teachers and friends and catching up after a long time spent apart. However, we have received very specific guidance from the DfE that we need to comply with. To fulfil this guidance on health and safety, there are measures that we have to take which will create a 'new normal'. We would like to take time to discuss the arrangements with your child over the summer, to prepare them fully for returning to school.

As a result, **school will look and feel very different**. We want to make sure that all parents and carers are aware of the changes that we will be making to follow the guidance and re-open. Initially, we will be establishing new routines and boundaries, as well as helping children to adjust to the changes in school.

Government guidance

This is the set of actions schools must take.

They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection' sections.

Please click on the link below for the full guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>





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Prevention:

- 1) minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school:

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you must stay at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 - go to [testing](#) to arrange.

- 2) clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
- 3) ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- 4) introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach
- 5) minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible
- 6) where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

Numbers 1 to 4 must be in place in all schools, all the time.

Response to any infection:

- 7) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
- 8) manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community
- 9) contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Numbers 7 to 9 must be followed in every case where they are relevant.

This is how we are applying the guidance at Blanford Mere Primary:

Groupings

- Children will be grouped into classes.
- There will be no social distancing between children in school, but teachers and staff will be expected to social distance from children, parents and each other as far as possible;
- EYFS children will not social distance in classrooms with their year group peers
- Children will sit in rows (from Year 2 upwards) with all children facing the board. Children will be expected to keep the same seat in the classroom and will not move around as normal (except in KS2 where groups for Spellings and Maths will still operate);
- Where possible, pupils will remain in their classes and not mix with other classes, however, because of the constraints of our school population and school site, there may be some mixing, e.g. at playtimes/lunchtimes, but this will be in phase groups



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- Assemblies will be closed (i.e. no parents invited) and will be held in classrooms. There will be no whole school assemblies;
- Lunch sittings will be held in the hall;
- Toilet times will be supervised and children will not be allowed to leave the classroom unless accompanied by an adult
- We cannot guarantee that children will not come across a child from another 'class' for visits to the toilet etc. *The guidance says that passing briefly in the corridor or playground is low risk.*
- Children will be taking part in P.E. mainly outdoors, however if the weather is poor this will be indoors.

Lunch arrangements

- The new catering company, Dolce, started their contract in June. A menu will be published on the website and parents need to pre-order/pay for the forthcoming week.
- Please read the School Grid leaflet that has been already been sent to you
- 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.
- We are limiting the number of belongings coming into and going out of school, therefore, children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 should take up their Universal Free School Meal. **Please do not send them with a packed lunch.**
- KS2 children will be allowed to bring lunchboxes to school again, or order a meal online through the School Grid system.
- The dining hall will be used for phase groups to eat their lunch, and will be cleaned in between sittings.
- The government has said that the FSM vouchers will be provided over summer holidays.

Arriving at and leaving school

- There will be strict arrangements for entry to school to allow for social distancing
- There will be no entry to the site for parents/carers, including the Reception parents
- 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; Year 2 children should be brought to the link corridor (next to Nursery entrance) and collected from there, socially distanced
- We will have staggered arrival and collection times for each class throughout school to avoid crowding
- Different classes will be given a specific time to arrive or be collected - these times will need to be adhered to for the plan to work
- The guidance advises that **one adult** only should accompany children to allow for social distancing
- In order to achieve staggered ends to the day without compromising on teaching time (a Government stipulation), lunch time may be reduced in length for some pupils;



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Timings will be as follows, with all pupils expected to attend school on Wednesday 2nd September, except for all Nursery children who will begin on Thursday 3rd September:

Reception children week 1 only.

To ensure a smooth transition to Reception children should attend at these times, on Wednesday 2nd, Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September only.

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Gate</u>	<u>Arrival time</u>	<u>Collection time</u>
Reception Cleeton	Reception gate (Earlswood Road)	8.45am	3.10pm
Reception Jordan	Reception gate (Earlswood Road)	9.05am	3.25pm

From Monday 7th September Reception children should follow the times on the table below.

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Gate</u>	<u>Arrival time</u>	<u>Collection time</u>
Nursery	Nursery Door	8.30am (AM) 12.10pm (PM)	11.25am Am only 3.10pm
Reception Miss Cleeton	Reception gate (Earlswood Road)	8.45am	3.10pm
Reception Miss Jordan	Reception gate (Earlswood Road)	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 1 Mr Wade	KS1 gate	8.45am	3.10pm
Year 1 Mrs Cartwright	KS1 gate	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 2 Miss Postings	Link corridor (next to Nursery entrance)	8.50am	3.15pm
Year 2 Miss Barclay	Link corridor (next to Nursery entrance)	8.55am	3.20pm
Year 3/4 Mrs Cameron	KS2 gate	8.45am	3.10pm
Year 3/4 Mrs Oliver	KS2 gate	8.50am	3.15pm
Year 3/4 Miss Dorricott	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)	8.50am	3.15pm



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What should my child bring to school?

- The School Uniform policy will take effect again from 2nd September and pupils will be expected to wear uniform. 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, as rooms will be ventilated at all times.
- 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.
- A personal stationery pack in a pencil case will be provided for every child. Please **do NOT** send your child with pencil cases and stationery;
- Bags are allowed again, 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 2nd September 2020
- **Year 6 children should not bring mobile phones to school (this will be reviewed throughout the autumn term)**
- Children 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 - there will be **no tuck** on sale initially. (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 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.
- There is an increased emphasis on cleaning and hygiene in the classroom and throughout the whole school. The classroom will be thoroughly cleaned at the end of every day too.
- 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; these will be cleaned regularly, along with all frequently touched surfaces.
- Resources that are shared between classes, such as sports, art and science equipment will be cleaned frequently and meticulously and always between classes, or rotated to allow them to be left unused and out of reach for a period of 48 hours (72 hours for plastics) between use by different bubbles.
- Outdoor playground equipment will be more frequently cleaned.
- Pupils and teachers can take books and other shared resources home, although unnecessary sharing should be avoided, especially where this does not contribute to pupil education and development.
- Similar rules on hand cleaning, cleaning of the resources and rotation should apply to these resources.
- For health and safety reasons, children will not be able to play games that involve touch.



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- Schools have been asked to encourage parents, staff and pupils to walk or cycle to school if at all possible.
- **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 Wednesday 2nd September. 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, once the clubs have commenced in September, we will not be admitting any further children in the first half of the Autumn term to maintain the group as a 'bubble'.

The guidance that we have outlined above will be followed and applied in these clubs.

After school sports clubs

Initially, we not operate any after school extra-curricular clubs. We shall review this in the Autumn term.

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 initially 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
- It is important to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation. Some children may need support to re-adjust to school; others may have enjoyed being at home and be reluctant to return; a few may be showing signs of more severe anxiety or depression. Others will not be experiencing any challenges and will be keen and ready to return to school.

The wider curriculum

- For children in nursery settings, teachers will focus on the prime areas of learning, including: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and physical development. For pupils in Reception, teachers will also assess and address gaps in language, early reading and mathematics, particularly ensuring children's acquisition of phonic knowledge and extending their vocabulary. For nursery settings and Reception, we will consider how all groups of children can be given equal opportunities for outdoor learning.



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- For pupils in key stages 1 and 2, school leaders will prioritise identifying gaps and re-establish good progress in the essentials (phonics and reading, increasing vocabulary, writing and mathematics), identifying opportunities across the curriculum so they read widely, and developing their knowledge and vocabulary. The guidance states that the curriculum should remain broad, so that the majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year, including sciences, humanities, the arts, physical education/sport, religious education and relationships and health education.

How can parents help?

We want to make the full reopening of school as safe as possible and to make the school day a positive experience for the 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 and **observing social distancing** 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 so that we avoid having too many adults in one area.
- **There will be staggered arrival and collection times from the same entrances, however, this will only work if parents leave the areas swiftly. This is for everyone's safety.**
- The government guidance states that schools should remind parents that '*gathering at the school gate and otherwise coming onto the site without an appointment is not allowed*'.
- Unfortunately, parents will not have the usual daily contact or conversation with teachers that they used to have before lockdown. Contact will need to continue to be via telephone or via your child's planner
- By limiting the number of adults who accompany children to school. Only one adult should drop off/collect their child.
- By collecting your child as quickly as possible if your child shows any signs of infection.
- By being flexible. We have created the best plan that we can to provide you with a full picture of what school will look like. This may have to change to ensure the safety and welfare of children and staff.
- Send your child to school everyday

Contingency planning for outbreaks

Process in the event of local outbreaks

If a local area sees a spike in infection rates that is resulting in localised community spread, appropriate authorities will decide which measures to implement to help contain the spread. The Department for Education will be involved in decisions at a local and national level affecting a geographical area, and will



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support appropriate authorities and individual settings to follow the health advice. We will provide more information on this process in due course.

Contingency plans for outbreaks

We will 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).

Although, we will do our very best to keep your children safe - we cannot guarantee social distancing.

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 and shared this with staff. However, our plans will only work everyone - staff, children and parents follow the plans that have been created and adhere to the most recent government advice.

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 to fully reopen school to all pupils from Wednesday 2nd September and Thursday 3rd September 2020 for Nursery children.

This is an extremely difficult time for everyone - for parents, staff and children. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to welcoming everybody back to school.

Try to have a wonderful summer break.

Best wishes,

Mrs N Miller and Miss A Stanton

Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher



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