

Bishop Road Primary School

Bishop Road, Bristol BS7 8LS



Head Teacher: Gillian Powe

Deputy Head Teacher: Joe Emissah

Friday 10th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Update Letter

As we near the end of term, I am writing to update you regarding the plans for full reopening in September. With a new academic year commencing in just a matter of weeks, parents will be pleased to see all children returning to full time education from 1st September in all year groups. We are confident children will make a positive start to the year and relish the familiar and important rhythms and routines of school. As we head towards a new year, we are all able to reflect and find new ways to approach challenges ahead. I know we have all learnt a great deal and will begin next year with a vision of how, regardless of the changes that may occur, we can ensure children's education can resume and continue as close to normal as possible.

We are preparing to send more detailed information for parents and carers in the final week of the holidays including videos to support children with transition. A 'Back to School Information' document will be emailed out and uploaded to the website on Friday 28th August. This information will take a similar format to that provided to the year groups that have returned to school this term ([see link](#)), but with some updates and amendments to reflect changes to government advice and our school approach.

Some of the more important changes that we will implement relate to the pragmatic expectations around younger children's ability to distance and learn together in classrooms. Across the school the key priorities for September will focus on keeping children in their class groups, maintaining separation of these groups and the hygiene measures (many of which are in place currently in school). As far as practicable, staff will be limited in the range of classes that they can work in and we will be using in-house release for teachers in place of external supply staff wherever possible.



Drop off and Collection

From September, there are significant changes to the organisation and timetabling within the school day that have been necessary to enable staggering of groups to reduce the risk of transmission. The organisation of the day is now centred around individual classes, instead of year groups or buildings. This has resulted in increased curriculum time for children in class and less time spent in transitions around school. We anticipate, however, that collection will be a considerably longer process given the requirement to maintain separation of class groups and social distancing between household bubbles moving through the site. The new arrangements are practical solutions to manage this challenging point of the day without losing learning time. Under the new arrangements, the drop off window and collection times will move to reflect this and are as follows (Reception staggered induction as per previous correspondence):

Whole school	Drop off: 8.35– 8.50 am
	Collection: 3.15pm

From September, the playgrounds will have separate but linked one way paths so parents with children in one building can avoid walking through both playgrounds, while those who need to drop/collect from both ends of the school will no longer be required to walk back on to Bishop Rd and the surrounding streets (the current arrangement).

Children will enter the buildings independently as normal, however there will no longer be the opportunity for parents to stop for handover conversations with staff on the playground. Parents will greet the teacher/support staff, leave or collect their child and keep moving through a continuous one way path system. Children and parents in school this term have found a similar arrangement has worked well and we trust that this approach will be just as successful in September. If your child does struggle at the handover point, please don't worry. There will be staff on hand to support. We know from experience, a quick handover to staff is often the way children transition best.

The specific plans and videos for this will be shared in August. We believe this system will be a considerable improvement on the arrangements prior to the pandemic, making the start and end of the day less busy and keeping groups of children separate.

Communication

Without conversations on the playground, the Year Group email will be the principle communication into school. Teachers will be checking this account regularly and will read and respond as soon as possible. We will aim to respond, by email or with a call, within two school days. We understand this restriction of contact with teachers is difficult and recognise we will have to work within the limitations of these new requirements to build and retain the positive relationships that staff, children and families share.



September return – Week 1 staggering

In order to support children and families in a return to full time education we will be staggering drop off times for the first two days as follows:

Tuesday 1st September Staggered drop off	Year 1, 3 & 5	8.30 – 8.45 am	Collection for all 3.15 pm
	Year 2, 4 & 6	9.15 – 9.30 am	

Wednesday 2nd September Staggered drop off	Year 1, 3 & 5	8.30 – 8.45 am	Collection for all 3.15 pm
	Year 2, 4 & 6	9.15 – 9.30 am	

In the first week, all class teachers will be standing on the playground at the drop off door to welcome children into school, with support staff in the classrooms. From week 2, this will revert to the normal arrangements with support staff welcoming children at the door and teachers in the class. At the end of the summer, please take time to watch the videos about drop off/collection with your child (available 28th August) to support them in making a positive start to the term. The current Reception and Year 1 children attending school next week will also get the opportunity to practise their route into school with their current teacher to help familiarise them with this before September.

Practical considerations

At lunchtimes, all children will be eating a packed lunch together in their classrooms. From 21st September, school meals will be available. Those in receipt of free school meals will continue to receive vouchers until this date. School meals will be a packed lunch instead of the usual hot meal throughout this term. The office will send out specific information about meals including infant universal free school meals next week.

Children should wear their normal school uniform from September and will be expected to have a change of clothes for PE lessons. PE will commence from 7th September with class specific days to be issued next term.

During Term 1, all children will have the same amount of outdoor time for breaks and sport as in previous years. Outdoor Learning, visits to the field and Nature Garden for classes will all be used to extend children's time outside wherever possible. Children will be outside every day and a suitable coat is essential.

Children are only permitted to bring in the following items in their school bag: a packed lunch and snack (no nuts), water bottle, a suitable coat (children will be outside in all weathers), sun cream (children must be able to apply this themselves) and a sun hat. Children in Yr 5/6 who walk home independently are allowed to bring in a mobile phone but this must remain switched off during the day. Children should not bring in any pencil cases, playground equipment or games.



As bags will be stored in classrooms, we ask that parents avoid sending in children with very large bags – the smaller the better!

Peripatetic music lessons (provided by Bristol Plays Music) for children in Years 4, 5 & 6 will not commence in the Autumn Term. We are anticipating that these will recommence in January and will update you when we know more about the plans for this.

After the first week, we would ask that, where parents feel it is safe for their child to do so, children in Year 5 & 6 walk themselves to and from school in order to minimise the number of people on the school site. Alternatively, parents might choose to leave the child outside the school gates. You are of course welcome to come in to the playgrounds with your child if that is your preference or more suitable for your child.

Childcare providers and after school clubs will be able to see our drop off/collection plans on the school website at the end of the summer. We will be liaising with BRAC directly who, from July, will resume their use of the Dirac Centre on the school field. With no stopping on the playground at drop off/collection, we would strongly advise that any childcare providers/childminders view the videos on the website and consider how these plans may impact them. All providers will be required to follow the systems set for the whole school community.

Home learning

A key element of our reopening plan is developing and implementing a new approach to home learning, should this ever need to be implemented for a class, year group or indeed the whole school. Everyone has worked hard to make the best of home learning, very much a new endeavour for schools, in a challenging period. Thank you for your support in this. For September, we are preparing a different approach to this aspect of school which we hope, of course, we will not need to implement. Daily interaction with staff, pupil feedback and continuity with normal school learning (in style, content and variety) will all feature as key differences. We will update you about this in September.

Whilst the government guidance has provided clarity regarding the overarching principles for full school opening, every school will have different considerations and specific circumstances that determine how these can be applied. In our decisions, we are focused on prioritising safety and the educational impact on children. We will be reviewing and evaluating our approach throughout the academic year, adapting and developing to best support children in the learning and wider development.

Thank you for working with us in this next phase for our school community. We look forward to welcoming everyone back and seeing children enthused by the learning and relationships that make school an enjoyable place to be.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Emissah
Deputy Head Teacher

