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Headteacher: Mr Iain Horner

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your children are well and have stayed safe over the Summer Holidays.

As you will know, before the Summer Holidays, the Government signalled an intention for all pupils to return to school full time at the start of the new academic year (3<sup>rd</sup> September for Chesterton pupils). As communicated to you in July, we have been monitoring any changes to the advice/restrictions for schools over the past few weeks in order to share the most accurate picture of how school will operate when term starts. Fortunately, to date, there has been little change to the guidance in recent weeks and we are now in a position to share the following with you.

Whilst school will be returning much closer to 'normal' than it was throughout the Summer Term, the continuing adaptations that we will need to implement at Chesterton to prepare for this academic year should not be underestimated. I would like to reassure you that the health and wellbeing of our pupils, families and staff remains the highest priority and we will do everything in our power to provide the safest possible environment. Whilst doing so, we will also endeavour to ensure that the experience of returning fully to school is as exciting and enriching as it can be. As the staff showed throughout 'lockdown', there are many creative solutions to keep the educational experience as positive as possible.

### **Risk Reduction Measures**

We have been working hard to formulate a plan that includes all reasonable adaptations to school life to reduce risk to our school community. These measures will include, but will not be exclusive to, the following:

- Although class sizes are now back to normal and closer interaction within bubbles is acceptable, children will not mix with those from other bubbles during the school day (see attached table, max. two classes). Whole school activities (e.g. whole school collective worship) will not take place for the foreseeable future.
- Contact with staff working with other bubbles will be minimised.
- There will be staggered entry and exit times for different groups (see attached table).
- Parents/carers will not be allowed to enter the playground or the school building.
- Seating in classrooms will be organised to maximise social distancing when possible, but please be aware that this will be limited by full class sizes and the space available in the classroom.
- There will be staggered break and lunch times (see attached table).
- Children will eat lunch in the classroom or in a designated outside area, weather permitting. All school meals will be cold options for the foreseeable future (change from July email).
- Regular hand washing and reinforcement of good hygiene with the children will continue.
- Regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces or items will continue.
- Children to have their own 'stationery packs' to avoid sharing whenever possible.
- Outdoor learning opportunities will be maximised.

## **Building Work**

As you can imagine, the ongoing building project at school provides an additional layer of complexity to our planning and organisation. Unfortunately, due to delays caused by the pandemic, the programme is running behind schedule. In short, what this means is that, while the school kitchen should be finished imminently, both the new classroom block and the extension to Maple Class will not be completed as early as hoped. The building compound, which would have still been on site for a large part of the Autumn Term in any case, affects our ability to allow 'bubbles' of children to remain separate before and after school and at break times. It also makes it impossible to safely allow parents onto the playground for the foreseeable future. However, we believe that we have found the best possible solution to this (attached table). Maple Class remains fully usable, with all work being completed externally at the current time. In due course, we will notify parents as and when classes will change location as the building work is completed. We are all very excited to see the culmination of the project and the new, expanded spaces look very promising for staff and pupils.

## **Home Learning**

Should the school need to close, or partially close, due to cases in school, a local or national lockdown, Home Learning resources will be provided as before and parents will be notified of any details as soon as possible.

## **Expectation to attend school**

The Government has stated that attendance at school now reverts to being compulsory for all pupils. If you have specific concerns or questions, please contact the school office.

## **Government Guidance**

Guidance that the Government has prepared for parents / carers can be found here:

[What parents and carers need to know](#)

As always, I thank you all for your patience and understanding during these most difficult of times. I appreciate that there will be some concerns regarding the full re-opening of schools, but I am confident that we can meet this next challenge with the same positivity, resilience and togetherness that the Chesterton community has shown over the past six months.

Kind regards,

Mr Horner

