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Monday 07 September 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Welcome back!

Thank you for your patience and support last week with our new school arrangements. Both transition days were a huge success and it was fantastic to welcome our pupils back to school.

This has been such a strange and confusing time for all of us and we have certainly missed the things that we take for granted such as learning, socialisation and structure. We very much hope that your child will quickly adjust into a new routine at school and although we have tried to keep much of what we do as familiar as possible, it will clearly be different. There will be lots of changes to learn and embed.

Key Stage Bubbles

Essentially we have extended the system that we had in operation in the Summer Term to incorporate five 'Key Stage Bubbles'. All classes will be taught largely in their own classroom within their own bubble area for most of the school day. Each bubble has its own playground and bathroom management area and pupils have to adhere to a one way system to avoid mixing with other bubbles. Except for a few designated staff members, staff will not mix between bubbles and movement between bubbles will be kept to a minimum.

For the time being there will be no whole school activities such as assemblies, coffee mornings and swimming. Assemblies will be done in Key Stage bubbles and swimming is restricted to pupils in Key Stage Two only. Going out of school during the first half of the Autumn Term will be kept to a minimum and strictly monitored. Equally external visitors coming into school will be restricted.

Regarding school bags, we are asking that pupils bring in the bare minimum. If your child requires a change of school clothes and nappies etc. we would prefer it if you could send in sets of clothes at the start of the week so that we can keep them in school and use as required. We will send home any used clothes at the end of the school day. Comfort toys or any additional items should stay at home unless requested by school staff.

Personal Protective Equipment

Staff will maintain high levels of cleaning and hygiene throughout the day with our cleaning team also in school every morning. Protective clothing (PPE) will be worn for personal care and at times when it is judged that there is a higher risk. On the basis of current evidence, in light of the mitigating measures we are taking, and the negative impact on communication, face coverings will not generally be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible.

Transport

Regarding getting to and from school, the transport company are not transporting pupils in their school bubbles. It is also not compulsory for pupils to wear a face mask therefore this would be your decision as a parent/carer. If you would like your child to wear a face covering on school transport and it is to be re-used please provide a plastic bag to store it in the classroom whilst in school.



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Pick-up and Drop-off times

Due to the way our bubbles are set up, we have introduced different entrances for different key stages. The times of the school day remain the same to ensure some normality for our pupils. As such, pupils can enter school at 8.45am and will leave at 3pm. If you are dropping off or picking up your child, please try not to park on the school site to help with congestion. We are also asking for parents/carers to 'drop and go' as there is now a queuing system and unfortunately there isn't time to have a conversation with class staff every day. If you do need to pass on a message please use the newly introduced class e-mail system that has been set up which is the name of the class followed by the usual email address e.g. 2CK@pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk

We will, of course, review drop-off and pick-up times and make changes if necessary.

If your child is unwell

Lastly, I would like to emphasise that the safety of everyone is paramount. If your child is unwell you must keep them off during this difficult time until symptoms have ceased. If your child needs calpol they cannot be in school. If your child becomes ill during the day they must be picked up as soon as possible. If you think your child or anyone in your household needs a COVID-19 test you must inform us so that we can make preparations in school in anticipation of a positive test.

Term Dates

Just to remind you our new term dates are now on our website, which you can find by clicking <https://www.pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Pitcheroak-Term-Dates-2020-2021-1.pdf>

If you have any questions, now or in the coming weeks, please don't hesitate to contact your child's class teacher, the Head of Department or any SLT member and we will endeavour to help.

Yours sincerely

S. Holden
Headteacher

