



September 1<sup>st</sup> 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following on from the government's announcement regarding schools opening fully, we have spent considerable time planning the details of how Gorse Hill Primary School will do this. We wanted to write to you to communicate how we intend to support our community and welcome back all of our pupils.

Outlined in the next few pages is information that we hope clarifies our position and how we intend to open our school fully. We want to stress that we cannot go into the government's reasoning about whether this is the right or wrong thing to do – what we can say is that we have been told to open and have created a plan which we believe helps to keep our community as a whole as safe as possible given the current circumstances. The government have produced multiple documents which are freely available to refer to via the DfE website should you want any further information. However, we must stress that this is guidance, and with the support of Trafford Local Authority, we have set our own course for how the school will open fully subject to conditions being met.

**The headlines of our reopening plans are as follows:**

- Children will return to their classes of 30 in year group bubbles.
- The kitchen will be providing their normal service with a choice of hot dinners or packed lunches.
- The plans are subject to change based on ongoing evaluation and updates from the government.
- Toast must be ordered and paid for half-termly and paid for on parentpay as staff are unable to attend cash on a day to day basis- this will be made and delivered to classrooms.
- At present, mass gatherings of multiple households are not permitted. As an SLT, we are working on how to deliver class assemblies and other community events- more information will follow.
- We will be able to provide breakfast and afterschool club, please refer to the Rising Stars information on the website for more information.
- Sports clubs will be for specified bubbles on specific days- more information will follow on this later.
- Children must bring two filled named bottles of water- one for the morning and one for the afternoon (in addition to any drinks they bring in for their lunch). This is to limit contact at the water fountain.

School will be different, although we will do everything we can to make sure school is as normal as possible for all pupils. There will be new rules and expectations about things like where they sit, who they see and who may not be part of their bubble. Children need to understand that adults will keep their distance, where possible and that resources, toys and equipment will be limited and in some cases, removed from classrooms, for example, soft toys and beanbags.

The school's Covid-19 risk assessment can be viewed on our website.

We look forward to seeing you all soon and in the meantime, hope that you are all well. Thank you once again for your support and for the kindness you have shown in the many emails we have received passing on your best wishes and thoughts. We have been humbled and touched.

Please continue to keep safe,

The Senior Leadership Team and the Gorse Hill Staff

## Frequently Asked Questions...

### **What is a 'Gorse Hill Bubble'?**

- Children will be placed in classes in year group bubbles.
- There will be staggered playtimes/ lunchtimes for year groups.
- Children will be encouraged to stay in their bubbles at playtimes, through playing in designated parts of the playground/ MUGA pitch.
- Less sharing of equipment- children will have their own zip wallets with equipment and books.
- Lunches and coats will be kept in the classroom. We ask that NO school bags are sent to school.
- Using outside spaces more, moving in the corridors less and no unessential personal belongings.

### **Will my child be socially distanced 100% of the time?**

At Gorse Hill Primary, the focus is year group bubbles and to reduce the mixing between the bubbles.

Primary aged children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In Nursery and Reception, social distancing is impossible and we will not even try to implement it as it could have greater emotional harm if implemented. In other year groups, children will be distanced in the classroom, however again, we cannot guarantee that this will be 2m due to the size of the classrooms.

#### ***The focus is on:***

- Minimising contact and not mixing between bubbles.
- Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- Frequent hand washing (new wall mounted hand sanitisers have been purchased and placed around the school) and good respiratory practices

### **When will my child come to school?**

The government has stated that it is a legal requirement for all children to return back to school from September.

All children will return to school on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> of September.

Children in nursery and reception have received specific information regarding their transition to school.

### **As a parent, how can I help?**

- Make sure you drop off and collect your child on time.
- Take your child's temperature before you come to school. Children must not come to school with a temperature above 37.7 degrees. We recommend that you phone your GP for advice if this is the case.
- Send your child in fresh clean uniform each day.
- Ensure your child has washed their hands for 20 seconds using soap before coming to school.
- Socially distance from the teacher.
- One parent per family 'drop and go. Please keep moving and do not stop and chat in the playground or outside the gates.
- Do not send your child to school for seven days if they have a dry cough, high temperature or loss of taste or smell, until a negative test result has been confirmed. Utilise the Covid-19 testing on offer to pupils and please keep us informed of the outcome.
- On PE day, pupils must come to school wearing their PE kit- black shorts, white T-shirt.

### **What if I choose not to send my child to school?**

- Our understanding is that the government will be issuing fines to parents whose children do not return from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

### **What time does school start and finish?**

- The school gates and doors will be open between 8:45 and 9am- giving you a 15 minute window to drop off your child/children and leave the school premises immediately.
- In order to enable lunchtime for all pupils, lunch times are now 15 minutes shorter and school will now finish at 3pm.
- School ends at 3pm, the doors and gates will be open from 2:45pm

### **What will the school day look like?**

- For all children returning, our primary aim, first and foremost, is to support mental wellbeing, especially given the reality that so many of them will have missed friends and staff, and will find themselves returning to a very different school experience from that which they remember.
- Initially, we will spend time doing lots of activities to support well-being. As children settle into school, we feel it is important to provide routine and structure within their day, and normalise being back in school.
- At this point, children will receive structured teaching sessions. We have no intention of putting children under pressure to cram or catch up on missed learning. We have created a catch up programme to support the needs of the children.

### **What should my child wear to school?**

- The government has said that all children must wear full uniform with plain black school shoes or plain black trainers (no logos or coloured soles).
- Children should come to school wearing their full PE kit on the days they have PE, to remove the need to change for PE.

### **What will Gorse Hill do if there is a suspected COVID-19 case?**

- We have separate, ventilated isolation rooms which will only be used for suspected cases
- The child will be supervised by an adult who will wear PPE equipment
- The parent will be called to come and collect the child
- The isolation room will then be thoroughly cleaned.

### **What happens if there is a confirmed case?**

- The child/staff member would self-isolate for 7 days, with the rest of the household isolating for 14 days. Any child or member of staff who displays symptoms are encouraged to be tested for COVID-19. Where the child/staff member tests negative, they can return to school.
- Where the test is positive, track and trace will inform close contacts of the individual with information about self-isolation.

### **Which entrance do I use to enter the playground?**

- Nursery, Reception, Y6, Y1 and Y4- use the side gates on Portland road.
- Y2, Y3 and Y5 use the gate on Cavendish road.

### **Shielded and extremely clinically vulnerable families**

- From the 1<sup>st</sup> August, shielding has been paused for children classed as extremely clinically vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions and are therefore expected to return to school.
  - If your child lives with an extremely clinically vulnerable adult then they should attend school.

### **Is my child allowed to wear a mask to school?**

- Government guidance clearly states that masks should not be worn in a school setting as children and staff are not mixing with strangers and the wearing of masks encourages more touching of the face.
- Regardless of setting, children under the age of 11 are exempt from wearing masks.

### **How can I communicate with the school office?**

- For the safety of our office staff, we ask you to communicate with the office via email and phone, even if you are on the premises.
- All items (packed lunch only) required for the day should enter school with the child.
- If you do have to come to the office, only one person in the lobby at a time and please stand at least two metres from the office window according to the floor markings.

### **Safeguarding**

- Our key priority is always the care and safeguarding of children. We are in regular contact with many families and pupils but, if you have a non-urgent safeguarding issue, please call school or email [office@gorsehillprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@gorsehillprimary.co.uk) and ask for either Miss Coxe or Mrs Bates to contact you. If something is urgent, you can contact Trafford First Response on 0161 912 5125

### **Important information:**

Trafford have allocated one additional training day due to exceptional circumstances to be used in the Autumn term. Gorse Hill Primary will be closed on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

Any Further questions please call the office or email- [parents@gorsehillprimary.co.uk](mailto:parents@gorsehillprimary.co.uk).