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3rd January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year to you all! As we enter 2021, we continue to face uncertain and difficult times. Whilst I half-expect a U-turn from the government at any time, at the time of writing, our school will be open tomorrow, Monday 4th January 2021. I have updated our risk assessments over the Christmas holiday, in light of the rapid increase in Coronavirus transmission in our local area. I would like to outline some changes for the first week back and then for the whole of the first half-term.

During the first week of term, we will not be using Coronation Hall for our usual PE sessions on Tuesday. Mr Mayne's sessions on a Friday morning with Acorn Class will be delayed until 15th January, to allow time for further analysis of transmission data in the local area, and in hope of some further guidance from the Local Authority or Government. This reduces the risk of transmission in using a publicly shared space and decreases the risk of transmission for local residents. I will update you next week on how we will move forward with this.

During the first week of term, Acorn Class will be split and taught with one year-group in Acorn Class and one year-group in The Glade. With 28 children, Acorn Class is our largest class and makes social distancing for staff and children difficult. Again, with transmission so high, it is right to utilise the space for as long as we are able to. Miss Heater will teach both year groups, supported by her teaching assistants. Again, we will review this over the week and I will update you, but the safety of staff and children needs to be paramount at this time.

Being older, the children in Chestnut Class are better able to stay in their allocated seats and socially distance. There are also considerably less children in this class. Children in Catkin Class are unable to socially distance, but have a much larger classroom to encourage this, where possible.

This half-term, to reduce the need for waiting, siblings should be dropped at school at the same time, to reduce the need for adults to stay around the school waiting. Please let us know on the first day back, which time you will be collecting your children (please choose a start and finish time from one of your child's class) and let us know by emailing office@slindonprimary.co.uk. Children

without siblings should be dropped at and collected from school at the allocated time for each class. In particular, we ask the parents/ carers of children in Catkin Class not to come onto the grounds earlier, as this increases the risk of transmission. If you are early, please wait in your car.

With such high rates of transmission in the local area, children may come to school in non-uniform to allow clothes to be washed more frequently. Most importantly, children need to come to school dressed in clothing that will keep them warm. We must continue to ventilate classrooms as we have been, but the weather has turned significantly colder. Despite keeping the heating on all day, the colder forecast may demand warmer clothes.

I want to reassure parents and carers that no referrals for Fixed Penalty Notices related to attendance will be made during the Coronavirus Pandemic. If I have concerns about your child/ children's attendance, I will have spoken with you and we will be working together on this already. This is how we will continue to work on concerns regarding attendance this half-term.

If you choose to keep your child at home, please be aware of the conditions in which we are able to provide remote learning, by reading our Remote Learning Policy within the 'Remote Learning' tab on our website. Unless the government implements the National Contingency Plan and closes schools in our area, we cannot provide remote learning whilst the school is open to all pupils, with the exception of cases where children and families have been instructed to self-isolate or for children deemed clinically extremely vulnerable. But as always, we will endeavour to work with each families' individual circumstances, where this is realistic and manageable for our teachers' workload.

Lastly, I want to say how proud I am of our community, in managing these difficult circumstances due to the Coronavirus pandemic so far, and how confident I am in our ability to continue to do so. Our transparency and communication are key, as is the kindness and support that is shown. As always, please continue to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns, otherwise I look forward to seeing you on Monday.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

With best wishes

Lucy Cooper
Headteacher