

Merton Junior School

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*'Be wise, together we
succeed'*

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday evening, we are so pleased that 'returning to face-to-face education in schools and colleges is a national priority', and we are excited at the prospect of welcoming all children back to school on Monday 8th March.

We are currently looking at the latest guidance provided by Public Health England (PHE) and the Department for Education (DfE) to see what adaptations need to be made to our practices and procedures in school including across the school site. Our priority is to ensure that everyone is safe and that we avoid mixing bubbles as much as possible to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

The school's Risk Assessment will be reviewed regularly. We will continue to operate staggered start and finish times as we did in the autumn term. There will be two groups operating:

Group 1: 8.45 - 3.20pm for the children who have been in school during the last lock down (vulnerable children and children of key workers) **and** those with siblings attending the infant school.

Group 2: 8.55 - 3.10pm for all other children who are not in Group 1.

In order to avoid big gatherings and swift movement around the school site, we will continue to ask that you:

- arrive as near to the staggered times above as possible
- continue to wear face masks whilst on school site
- ensure that only **one** parent drops off or collects
- keep to the 2 metre social distancing rule
- leave the school site as quickly as possible
- make an appointment to speak to a member of staff, if needed

Unfortunately, we are unable to permit parents and siblings to use the toilet facilities at any time.

We will operate year group bubbles, therefore classes will be able to mix for their learning and can share working areas and equipment. Staff will continue to follow the social distancing rules as advised by the Department of Education (DfE) and the school risk assessment.

Year 3 & 4 children will enter/exit via their external classroom doors. Year 5 children will enter/exit via the fire escape doors (as before) and year 6 children will enter/exit through the pupil door (as before).

Children will use anti-bacterial gel on arrival in school and will regularly wash their hands throughout the day.

Attendance

From 8th March, school will be compulsory and the Government has advised schools to exercise the usual rules on attendance. This will include the option to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices. Parents must complete a Leave of Absence form before any absences or holidays in term time are booked. However, in line with current policy, it will be unauthorised unless it is deemed to be an exceptional circumstance. Please remember to inform the school straight away if your child is going to be late or absent for any reason – if the school is unable to ascertain the reason for any absence it will be unauthorised.

Break and Lunchtimes

These will be staggered times to ensure that year group bubbles do not mix. Hot dinners will be served in the school hall, sandwiches will be eaten in classrooms or outside weather permitting. Please do not allow your child to use outdoor play equipment or the outside gym before and after school as this will affect the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Each year group bubble will be assigned a day to use the outdoor equipment which will be supervised by staff. The equipment will be cleaned before use.

Clubs

Breakfast and After School clubs will also resume from Monday 8th March at the Infant school. They will accommodate infant and junior children as one bubble but will keep them socially distanced in their allocated room. Other clubs managed by staff will not take place this half term.

In the meantime, please continue to engage with Google Classroom activities and encourage your child to do their very best.

INSET Day

Both infant and junior schools had booked Monday 15th March as an INSET day. This will still go ahead as both schools have already booked external agency training. Other INSET days are also booked for Friday 28th May and Monday 5th July.

Staff testing

Staff will continue Coronavirus testing twice per week.

Thank you for your continuing support, patience and understanding.

Stay safe and take care.



Mrs K Reading
Head teacher