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Saltwood Church of England Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Reopening Saltwood School to All Children in September

I am very pleased to be writing to you with information about the reopening of our school to all children in September. As you know, the school closed to almost all children on 20th March this year and only reopened to limited year groups on 8th June. On **Thursday 3rd September** we will finally be able to welcome back our whole school community for the first time in more than six months.

We are able to do this because government guidance issued on 2nd July indicated that it is now safe to do so. The incidence of Covid-19 in the country has fallen to a low enough level to allow us to safely teach children in full class groups again – although there will be a continuing need for schools to operate a system of controls that minimise the risks of Covid-19 transmission.

This letter contains important information about the system of controls that you can expect to find in place at Saltwood Church of England Primary school and ways in which you as parents can help us to keep all children safe in the new term. We have completely revised the Risk Assessment created for the school in June to reflect this new guidance and new Behaviour and Child Protection Policies will be in operation – all of which can be found on our website.

When will the school be open?

All children will be expected to return to school on Thursday 3rd September. Our new Reception intake will start a week of half day sessions on Monday 7th September. The school will no longer need to close on Friday afternoons and children's attendance will be recorded as normal. Our usual Attendance Policy will be applied from the start of the school year.

How will children be kept safe while at school?

We will implement a system of controls across the school that ensures we comply with the latest government guidance. Full details of these controls are set out in our Risk Assessment. The main features are:

- Nobody with Coronavirus symptoms will attend school. Anyone developing symptoms during the school day will be sent home and asked to follow self-isolation and testing procedures.
- Any member of the school community with Coronavirus symptoms will be asked to arrange for a Covid-19 test. The school will engage fully in the national Test and Trace system.
- Children and adults will wash their hands frequently throughout the day. New hand washing facilities have been installed on the playground to this end.
- Children will be taught in whole class groups (or 'small bubbles'). These groups will be kept separate from other groups for the great majority of the school day.
- Furniture will be arranged in classrooms to prevent children sitting opposite each other. The same principal will apply in the dining hall.

- Where there is a need for class groups to share a space (such as the hall or playground) they will do so in distinct groups of not more than two classes ('large bubbles'). Large bubbles will only be used when there is no alternative, to allow normal school operation.
- A regime of enhanced cleaning will be in place across the school. Tables and hard surfaces will be cleaned with antiviral products daily. An anti-viral 'fogging' machine will be used to clean shared spaces such as the ICT suite whenever a group has left the room.
- Contact between individuals will be minimised and social distancing promoted where possible. Children will arrive and leave the school in staggered groups to reduce the number of people on site at any one time.

How will we help children get used to school again?

Most of our children will not have been in school since March. We are carefully planning a 'Recovery Curriculum' that builds on and values all the learning that has taken place at home during this time. At the start of the year children will be given learning objectives drawn from the previous year to develop their self-confidence. Teachers will carefully assess any gaps in knowledge that have arisen and 'Catch Up Time' will feature in every class each day.

We will remind the children of our Christian Values and use them to celebrate acts of love and kindness. Teachers will ensure there is a prayer space in every classroom to help the children reflect on their own feelings and speak to God if they wish.

There will also be a greater focus on Personal, Social and Health Education in the curriculum, helping children restore their relationships with each other and talk about their experiences during lockdown.

What will it be like when we arrive on the first day?

In our parent survey, the majority of parents expressed a wish to see the school as normal as possible in September, but a significant proportion would be reassured by visible Covid-19 precautions. We have tried to strike a balance.

Those parents and children who have been onto our school site since 8th June will be quite familiar with the arrangements that will be in place in September. We will continue to stagger our start and end times to reduce the number of people arriving at once, full details of timings are at the end of this letter.

If you haven't been on site for some time, the first thing you will notice is a one-way system has been established that requires families to enter the school via Grange Road. Please walk through the gates, following the arrows, onto the playground and drop your children at the appropriate classroom door. All parents should leave the site via the School Road alleyway without waiting on the playground.

Teachers will be waiting at the classroom doors to greet the children. However, they will not be able to have long conversations with parents at this point as queues will form. If you do need to wait you will see social distancing indicators on the ground to help keep families safely spaced. If your child is reluctant to separate from you at this time, please leave the site with them and return via the school office when they feel ready.

Bikes and scooters can be brought as normal. Anyone riding a bike to school MUST wear a helmet. All riders should dismount before entering the school drive. Bikes and scooters should be pushed to the appropriate rack and parked at the owner's risk.

Charlotte will be operating our School Crossing Patrol in School Road as usual. Please help her maintain appropriate social distancing at all times and remember to avoid crossing the road behind her.

From Year 1 upwards, desks will be arranged to avoid children sitting opposite each other. Children should find their classrooms less cluttered and roomier. Children will be asked to wash their hand frequently during the day and older children will also be given hand sanitiser to use.

Reception children will have a free flow approach to learning indoors and out. They will not be joining older children on the playground at the start of the year.

Children will not be expected to socially distance themselves from other children in their class. Adults will sensitively remind children if they are playing or behaving in an inappropriate way. Year 1 and 2 will form a 'large bubble' for lunch and playtimes, sharing the playground and field if weather allows. Year 3 and 4 will do the same, as will Year 5 and 6. These 'large bubbles' will only operate outside and in the dining hall. It will be safe for the children to use the outdoor play equipment.

At the end of the day parents should follow the same one-way system, waiting outside the relevant classroom door to collect the children. Please observe social distancing at this time. Collecting times will also be staggered to reduce numbers. If you have any concerns or wish to pass on any information to your child's teacher, please telephone the school office to arrange a conversation. Our staff will be happy to telephone you at a convenient time. Mrs Nash or myself will also be available if you need to speak to us.

Will the children need school bags?

Yes. I am delighted to say that we will be able to send home reading books again from the start of the term so a book bag (Key Stage 1) or a small school bag (Key Stage 2) will be needed. We will be supplying all children with their own set of stationery and a pencil case which will stay in class so there is no need to bring in any of these items from home. Lunchboxes and water bottles can go home every day for cleaning.

Will school dinners be available?

Yes, a full menu of school meals will be available from the first day of term. Parents can make payments on Parent Mail as usual. Children in years R, 1 and 2 will again be entitled to a free school meal. Children will eat in the dining hall in large bubble groups. Parents can choose to send in a packed lunch if preferred.

Will the Free School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme be running again?

Yes, children in Years R, 1 and 2 will receive a daily piece of fruit or vegetable. Children in Key Stage 2 may bring fruit or vegetables as a snack for morning break times, but nothing in a wrapper please.

Will school uniform be worn?

Yes, with some changes. We have decided that the Saltwood school tie should not be worn as part of the Autumn/Winter uniform this year to minimise the amount of loose clothing in school. We have also decided that children should wear their PE kit to school on days when their class is having PE lessons to avoid the need for children to change. A suitable tracksuit is part of the PE kit. Children may wear trainers on these days but should continue to wear school shoes at all other times.

Will breakfast and after school clubs be running?

Yes, although we have decided it is not possible to safely share the Saltwood Play and Learning Centre building with children who are attending the nursery. The Breakfast Club and 321 After school club will be

based in the school building in September. Please email businessmanager.splc@outlook.com if you wish to book a place at either of these services for September. Children should arrive via the school's Grange Road entrance between 7.45am and 8.10am to be greeted at the Deedes' Room entrance. Please can parents observe the one-way system after dropping off children and leave via the School Road alleyway.

Will there be after school sports clubs in September?

Not at first. We hope to work with Elite Community Coaching and other providers to reinstate this offer during the first few weeks of the first term.

Will there be Gold Book?

I'm afraid not. We are not able to gather the whole school together for any form of assembly or collective worship and visitors to the school will be kept to a minimum. We will explore other ways to celebrate children's success and ensure we are able to worship together as a community. It is hoped that large bubble groups may be able to visit the church from time to time.

Will there be the usual parental consultations?

The way we communicate children's progress to you will need to change. We will not be able to invite parents in to our usual 'Orientation' meetings at the start of term. Teachers will produce a class newsletter with welcome information instead. Drop in Zones will also not be possible under the current climate. Parent's evenings will also have to change their format as it will not be safe to ask parents to attend the school in large numbers, even in the Autumn. We will develop a system of telephone or video consultations with your child's teachers.

What will happen if there is a resurgence of Coronavirus in the future?

Our system of controls is designed to minimise the impact of a Covid-19 case on the wider school community. However, schools are being asked to prepare robust plans to allow them to quickly revert to home learning should the need arise. We are committed to ensure that any child unable to attend school receives high quality home learning opportunities as quickly as possible. Our school will work closely with local health protection teams at all times and will act on their advice and guidance.

What does the school require of us as parents?

The support you have shown us since lockdown has made a real difference to the morale of our staff. As we move towards a more normal future we appreciate everything you can do to help us implement our system of controls. Parents will need to fully engage with the Test and Trace system. Parents must also agree to seek a Covid-19 test if any member of your household develops Coronavirus symptoms.

The Saltwood team have spent a great deal of time and effort to ensure that your children are welcomed back into a friendly and familiar school environment. We are all looking forward to being together again as a school community and I hope that, over time, many of the restrictions I have outlined in this letter can be eased.

Wishing you all a peaceful and happy summer.



Paul Newton
Executive Head Teacher



Information for parents

Arrival Times:

Year 3,4,5 & 6	8.40am
Year 1 & 2	8.50am
Year R	9:00am

Please collect your child at:

Year R	3:00pm
Year 1 & 2	3:10pm
Year 3,4,5 & 6	3:20pm

If your child has siblings who are required to arrive/leave at different times, you need only come onto the site once. Please arrive at the earliest time and leave at the later time.

We will write at the start of the term to inform you of the days your child should come to school wearing their PE kit.