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Saltwood Church of England Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Returning to School in September

At the end of last term, I promised to write to you in August to set out the way the school will operate this Autumn. Schools received new Covid-19 operational guidance from the Department for Education in July and I'm pleased to say that this has not changed over the summer holiday period, so we now have some confidence in how to proceed!

Now that the country has reached Step 4 of the government's road map towards easing of restrictions, schools are being told to reduce disruption to children's education as much as possible. The most significant change being that the NHS will take over responsibility for contact tracing among school children and we are no longer required to keep the children in separate 'bubbles'.

This means that, for the first time since March 2020, our school will be able to operate in a way that closely resembles the way things were before the pandemic. We will be able to allow children to mix at play and lunchtimes, and we will be able to hold whole school assemblies and visit the church again.

However, some precautions will stay in place with a view to minimising risk. We will also take this opportunity to refine and improve some routines.

How will we reduce the risk to children and families from September 2021?

We will continue to maintain regular handwashing and enhanced respiratory hygiene procedures. We will continue to ventilate classrooms and common areas as much as possible. Our cleaning regime will remain at an enhanced level. All staff will be asked to engage in twice weekly lateral flow testing.

Children who display symptoms of Covid-19 while at school will be isolated and sent home. Parents will be asked to obtain a PCR test for their child. Children should not be sent to school if they are displaying any Covid-19 symptoms. Members of the child's household will not be required to self-isolate if they have been fully vaccinated, or are below the age of 18 years and 6 months.

Since 18th July, schools have not been required to undertake contact tracing if a case of Covid-19 is identified within the school community. Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace. There will no longer be a need to automatically send an entire class of children into self-isolation should a positive case be identified. We will work closely with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. In these circumstances, schools are required to have an 'outbreak management plan' which sets out measures that can be put into place should a number of cases be identified in the same setting.

At Saltwood, our outbreak management plan will involve a quick return to the system of bubbles and the reintroduction of other measures set out in the Risk Assessment we produced last year. This means parents should be prepared for the situation to change quite rapidly. Parents are also asked to fully engage in the Test and Trace system and seek PCR tests when requested.

When will school start?

All children are expected to start the school year on Monday 6th September.

The school gates will be opened at 8.40am and close at 8.50am. Late arrivals should make their way to the school office. We would like to retain the one-way system for parents and children, as this has proved very effective in helping families maintain social distance. Please enter the site via Grange Road and leave from the School Road alleyway.

Parents should drop children at their classroom door where they will be greeted by their teacher.

Our new Reception class will attend for half days for the first week, alternating between mornings and afternoons. Children attending morning sessions should arrive between 8.40am and 8.50am at the Reception classroom doors. Children attending afternoon sessions should arrive at 1pm at the school office.

When will school finish?

All classes will be dismissed at 3.20pm each day. Parents should arrive on site via the Grange Road entrance and wait on the playground outside the classroom doors. There is no longer a requirement for parents to wear a face covering while on site, but please consider others and maintain social distance.

Children in Year 3 will be dismissed from the playground door outside the Reception Class outdoor area
Children in Year 4 will be dismissed from the double doors next to the Year 6 classroom

Please leave the school site via the School Road exit as soon as possible after collecting your children.

Reception class children attending morning sessions during the first week should be collected at 12pm from the office foyer.

What will the children need to bring?

Children will only need to bring a named water bottle, lunchbox, their reading book and reading record to school each day. All stationery will be provided by us.

PE kits should be worn to school on PE days. More information will follow from class teachers about PE days and other curriculum timings.

School Meals

Children will eat lunch in three sittings and will then be able to play together outside. Parents can order and pay for school meals via ParentMail as previously or send in a packed lunch. All children in Years R,1 and 2 are entitled to a free school meal, but these will need also to be booked via ParentMail.

Children in Year R, 1 and 2 will receive a fruit snack provided by the school. Free milk will be provided until children reach their 5th birthday, and can be purchased via Coolmilk thereafter.

Children in Years 3-6 can bring in a fruit or vegetable snack (nothing processed) to eat at playtime if they so wish.

Will school uniform be worn?

Please ensure children are wearing the full [Saltwood Summer school uniform](#), which includes a jumper or cardigan with the school logo and a red checked shirt or dress.

PE kit must include a plain white polo shirt with red shorts. For colder days a plain red sweatshirt and black jogging bottoms. Please note that **trainers should only be worn on PE days** and black school shoes must be worn on every other day.

After the October half term break children should wear the full winter uniform, which includes a white shirt or blouse with the school tie.

Will breakfast and after school clubs be running?

Yes, these services will be fully open from the first day of term, operated from the Deedes Room as usual by The Saltwood Play and Learning Centre. Bookings should be made via businessmanager.splc@outlook.com

Keeping Parents Fully Involved

At Saltwood, we are proud of the excellent relationship we have with our parents. As restrictions are eased, we aim to find ways to communicate with parents that minimise risk but still keep you fully informed. At the start of the new term in September we will publish an 'orientation' video from each class teacher, which will set out what you need to know about your child's class. There will also be a newsletter with curriculum information for you.

Parents of our new Reception children will be invited into demonstration sessions to explain how we teach reading and phonics, so that you can support these vital areas of learning at home.

Later in the term we hope to be able to invite parents into school for a 'Drop in Zone' to view the work the children have completed so far in the year. We will then offer all parents individual consultations with teachers at a parents' evening at the end of the first term. I will be consulting you to ask if parents would prefer these meetings to be in person or over Zoom, given the success of Zoom parent meetings last year.

We are also introducing a weekly class worship to which parents will be invited in the school hall. Further information will follow in the newsletter. We will celebrate children's achievements in school and prizes and certificates will be sent home regularly.

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

Schools are being asked to prepare robust plans to allow them to quickly revert to class bubbles or home learning should the need arise. We are committed to ensure that any child unable to attend school due to Covid-19 can quickly switch to home learning using our Seesaw platform. Our school will work closely with local health protection teams at all times and will act on their advice and guidance.

We are all really excited at the thought of this return to a much more 'normal' way of schooling. However, we are fully aware that case numbers remain high and there is a need for us all to be vigilant. We will always consider Covid security in the context of the prevailing local conditions when planning curriculum and other events during the year.

I hope you enjoy the remaining week of the summer holiday and am looking forward to seeing you all again on 6th September!

Kind Regards



Paul Newton

Executive Head Teacher