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*Headteacher: Mr William Neighbour*

Dear Parents,

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020

This documents sets out the school's plan for the full opening of Newlands from 3<sup>rd</sup> September. These plans are flexible and will be reviewed on a daily/weekly basis. The contents of this plan have been informed by documents and guidance that continues to be issued and updated and can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

#### **When will the full opening start?**

The full opening of the school is on the first day of the Autumn Term, Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020. This will be for years one to six, with the new reception class following a transition plan announced pre-Covid and starting on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September.

#### **Which year groups will be able to return to school?**

All children will return to school.

#### **Is it compulsory for my child to attend school?**

Yes. It is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory again from the beginning of the autumn term. This means from that point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age;
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Shielding advice for all/most adults and children will pause on the 1<sup>st</sup> August, meaning the majority of pupils should return to school in September. If, despite shielding being paused, you have been told by a medical professional that your child should not attend school, contact me at [w.neighbour@newlands.hants.sch.uk](mailto:w.neighbour@newlands.hants.sch.uk) and we will formulate an individual plan for your child.

#### **Effective infection protection and control**

A range of approaches and actions will be employed to do this. These can be seen as a hierarchy of controls that, when implemented, creates a safer system, where the risk of transmission of infection is reduced.

These include:

**Prevention:**

1. minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
2. clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
3. ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach
4. introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach
5. minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible

In addition, the school will engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

**Personal protective equipment (PPE) including face coverings and face masks**

The advice from the government is that, ‘settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 1 metre plus from others’. The advice goes on to say the use of face masks by young children could ‘inadvertently increase the risk of transmission’. As a result, children will not be wearing facemasks while in school and will be asked to remove them if they are wearing one.

**Social Distancing**

The government guidance acknowledges ‘unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 1 metre plus apart from each other and staff’. While we will encourage social distancing, our plans are made on the assumption this will not be possible. While we will remind children of social distancing, we will not be continuously ‘nagging’ them or reprimanding them for not following an instruction that is widely acknowledged as being impossible.

**Class sizes and make up**

Children will be in their classes. Contact between the classes will be minimised, with each class treated like a bubble. To this end, classes will have lunch and breaks separately. There will be no whole school gatherings such as assemblies. The guidance allows adults to move between classes to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum. It will be necessary for some movement of adults, however movement will be limited, happening only out of necessity for educational or safety reasons.

**Dropping off and picking up from school**

The school site will continue to operate a one way system. Children (and a maximum of one parent or adult only) will enter through the gate on the Newlands Close side of the site and exit on the Mistletoe Road side. Families will be expected to observe social distancing with two metre gaps between families. Lines will be painted with temporary paint to indicate the appropriate place to stand. Years 1-6 children will enter through the front entrance and make their way to their classroom. Reception children will be dropped off and picked up from the classroom door (only one class using the infant entrance will allow for social distancing at the entry/exit of the EYFS playground).

We have mapped out a number of scenarios for the start and end of the day. There are positive and negatives to the many scenarios we have explored. Firstly, we need to avoid a mass of families gathering at the school but the guidance is clear that children should lose no learning time. Our next priority was convenience for you as families - it was here that staggered drop off times for year groups became a problem with families having to queue multiple times. We know from our partial opening in the summer term that drop off is a relatively quick process. From September, registers will be taken in the classroom which will make drop off even quicker. With all this considered, in September the school day will have a soft start from 8:30am to 8:45am. We are asking families to self-stagger their arrival. If the vast majority aim for 8:30am, the system will be unworkable and we will reconsider our plan.

Our summer term opening has shown us the pick-up is a slower and more problematic process. As a result, we will need to stagger pick up times. We will adjust break and lunch times to ensure that no teaching time is lost. Children will be picked up from the same location they were dropped off. It will not be possible for siblings from across year groups to leave at the same time. It's important that parents join the line at the correct time as parents being late will result in parents in the wrong line and us having to accommodate more bubbles of children in a limited space. Pick up times will be;

Reception, Year 1 & Year 2: 3:00pm

Years 3 & 4: 3:10pm

Years 5 & 6: 3:20pm

### **What happens if someone becomes unwell at Newlands?**

If anyone becomes unwell with a high temperature, new, continuous cough or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste, they will be sent home and advised to book a test and self-isolate. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. If a child or staff member tests negative, they can return to school and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation. Unless Public Health England advise in a different way, where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that class do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

### **Will children and young people be eligible for testing?**

Yes. Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing>), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet.

### **Will the school be able to provide lunch?**

Infant children (Reception, years 1 & 2) will be eating in the school hall and will be able to order lunch in the same way as before the partial closure of the school. Junior children (years 3, 4, 5 & 6) will be eating lunch in their classroom and will have two options from a takeaway menu that will be delivered to the classroom. All children will continue to have the option of bringing their own packed lunch from home. Please, when making a packed lunch, be considerate of the fact that children in junior classes will eat in rooms with carpets. We have learnt the hard way that cleaning yogurt from school carpets is not an easy task. School lunches will continue to be paid for in the same way as usual. We are currently working with Mrs Phillips-Stafford and Hampshire County Council Catering Services (HC3S) on a menu for September.

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

The school office will be open and contactable by telephone. It will only be open in person in emergencies or by pre-arranged appointment. We will continue the successful strategy of communicating with one voice. To this end you will continue to be able to e-mail me directly [w.neighbour@newlands.hants.sch.uk](mailto:w.neighbour@newlands.hants.sch.uk). I can then forward on messages to the relevant members of staff.

### **What can my child bring to school?**

Children should wear school uniform (please see the updated policy on the web-site). We have had to switch off the water fountains in the school so children will need to bring a filled water bottle(s) with enough water (**no squash or juice**) to last the day and non-school water bottles are more than welcome. Children can bring a healthy snack of fruit or vegetables. Book bags and PE kit can be brought into school. Children will not be allowed to bring other items from home such as pencil cases, toys, trading cards etc. We have plenty of anti-bacterial hand wash in school so children **must not** bring their own. We are seeing

increasing numbers of bottles in pockets and lunchboxes and there is a risk these gels could be ingested by accident and cause significant harm, hence the need for gels to be used only when supervised.

**What will the school curriculum look like?**

We must teach a broad and balanced curriculum. There is further detail in the government's guidance signposted at the top of this letter. Some subjects will be blocked to allow resources to be cleaned and isolated for 72 hours before being used by another class. All years groups will give additional time to support the emotional well-being of children and teachers are planning carefully how best to support each year group. For example, the children in Yr1 will have their own outside space and free-flow opportunities like they experienced in YrR to begin the new year. All teaching will continue to address any potential gaps children may have and there will also be additional catch up sessions in the afternoons.

**Will the school be running any after school clubs?**

With school being compulsory it is essential we provide as risk free an environment as possible. Community operators such as sports clubs and scouting groups are attended by choice and are likely to, or already have, started sessions but we as a school must operate to higher standards due to the compulsory nature of education. We are still reviewing the guidance around external providers running clubs in school. My initial reaction is that the guidance is ambiguous. However, for operational reasons, it looks like we will be unable to initially offer any of our own after school clubs. If staff were to run a club that stretched across multiple classes, one case of Covid could have wide reaching and disruptive consequences. For example, one case in enrichment club would result in all children in enrichment club isolating for 14 days as well as the class the child was from having to isolate. In addition, the reception class would be without their teacher while Miss Davies was also isolating. As with all aspects of our plans this will be under constant review and as soon as we can offer these safely we will.

**Can I book appointment for my child during the school day?**

During the partial opening of the school we have said no. Children have had to attend for full days only. From September we can be more flexible. However, parents must only take children out of school in emergencies or when it is impossible to book essential appointments outside school times.

**Will school be running normal autumn term events?**

We have set, and will soon publish, the dates of our normal events during the year. As with this year we want to give you as much notice as possible of dates. However, a significant number of these events, according to current guidance, can't go ahead. If the guidance doesn't change we will look to find either alternatives dates or ways of running them. For example, we are investigating the possibility of holding parents' evenings via Teams or Zoom.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support, co-operation and understanding during these unprecedented times. Your kind words and support have meant a lot to me and the staff and we are grateful to be able to work in such a wonderful school community.

Have a happy and safe summer.

Yours sincerely



Mr William Neighbour  
Headteacher