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Dear Parents and Carers

As always, I hope this letter finds you well and that you have been enjoying the summer holidays. I last wrote to you in July with some key details and information for the first day back to school and staggered start times in September. I can now expand on some of this information, much of which details changes that are necessary for us to make since the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic. Included in this email is a newsletter attachment for the children to read, or have read to them. The purpose of the newsletter is to share the excitement of the new school year. I hope this letter provides you with all the information you need for your child/ children's return to school. Further information will of course be sent to you at the start of the academic year.

1. First day back to school for Years 1-6 (Friday 4th September)

On this day only, each class will come into school at the times below:

Catkin Class 9.00

Acorn Class: 9.15

Chestnut Class 9.30

There will be no cars parked in the staff car park to give us enough space to welcome children back to school. Please try to bring your child into school at their allocated time and ensure social distancing of 2-metres between yourself and other families. Our focus will be on creating a happy and smooth transition back into school. Staggering the times in this way on the children's first day allows us to see them in smoothly without creating a large queue for handwashing facilities

2. Staggered start times (from Monday 7th September for the remainder of the year)

From September, we will stagger the start of the day to ease the number of families needing to stand together and therefore better facilitating for social distancing requirements. As staff, we have often spoken of and considered implementing a 'soft start' to the school day, which many other schools have adopted.

So from Monday 7th September and for the remainder of the year, the school day will begin as follows;

- Children in Catkin Class will enter their class via the playground door anytime from 8.50am (as they have always done). Only parents/carers of children in Catkin Class may accompany their children onto the playground. Children in Year 1 and 2 will then take their name from the board outside their classroom to self-register before washing their hands and sitting in their own seat. A member of Catkin Class staff will be with them to support with this. We ask that parents of Year 1 and Year 2 children stay on the main playground and encourage their child to enter the class independently.

- Parents/ carers of children in Reception may stay in the Catkin Class outdoor area with their child until they are settled, as we always did within the class before the Coronavirus Pandemic. Further details have been sent to the parents/ carers of our new Reception children.

Catkin Class children will be collected from the main playground at the new time of 3.15pm.

As always, please observe social distancing guidelines between yourself and other families.

- Children in Acorn Class will enter the school via the main door from 8.45am. They will be supported to wash their hands and sit in their allocated seat to begin work independently, such as reading or Times Tables Rock Stars.

Acorn Class children will be collected from outside of the main school gate at the new time of 3.20pm.

We ask that parents/carers of children in Acorn Class wait behind the school gate at the end of the day and please observe social distancing guidelines between yourself and other families.

- Children in Chestnut Class will enter the school via The Glade door and will be supported to wash their hands before taking their allocated seat to begin their independent work such as reading.

Chestnut Class children will also be collected from outside of the main school gate at the new time of 3.25pm.

We ask that parents/carers of children in Chestnut Class wait behind the school gate at the end of the day and please observe social distancing guidelines between yourself and other families.

Siblings can of course arrive at the same time. Please let us know which time works better for you, during the first week of term.

Class ‘bubbles’

During the summer term, we had to implement many changes in adherence to government guidance. In line with our necessary risk assessments, many of these changes will continue into this academic year to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19. These include the staggered starts to minimise families standing in close proximity and allow us to begin the day with hand-washing routines, as well as the changes to children coming to school in their PE kits and a number of other measures. With the September newsletter, I will attach a copy of our latest risk-assessment.

With respect to class ‘bubbles’ and the changes we are making in school this year, I want to outline the following information;

- Key Stage 2 (Acorn and Chestnut Classes) will form one bubble. At the moment this includes a total of 32 children. The children will be in their classes as usual but will have the same break and lunch times. In both of these classes the desks are arranged in rows, which the children at school over the summer term loved!
- EYFS and Key Stage 1 (Catkin Class) will form their own bubble. They will have a different morning break time and they will continue (as they always have done) to play separately from Key Stage 2 at lunchtime. It is not possible for the youngest children to socially distance as they older children may. Therefore, the class remains set as it was last year, without the tables being in rows.

Physical Education

This year **all children will have PE on a Tuesday afternoon.** We will be using Mr Coyle’s expertise to support teachers in delivering PE lessons. As usual, PE will be outside until the October half term. From the

second half of the Autumn Term (Autumn 2) and the first half of the Spring Term (Spring 1), we have booked Coronation Hall for our PE lessons, returning outside from Spring Term 2.

To adhere to government guidance, this year we are asking that **all children come to school on a Tuesday, dressed for PE**. This is so that we limit opportunities for children to take the wrong clothes home and we are keeping items brought in from home to a minimum. Therefore, we ask that you keep an eye on the weather and dress your child/ children accordingly. Children should wear their school PE-shirt and school jumper as usual, but may wear jogging bottoms or leggings instead of shorts on colder days. Children will also be permitted to wear trainers instead of plimsolls.

Ivy our School Dog

I hope the children are excited about our new school dog Ivy. Ivy comes from a loving farming family (agricultural farm, not puppy farm!) Ivy's Mum is the family pet and she grew up on a beautiful farm with young children and animals. She has a wonderful temperament and is attending puppy classes and will continue with obedience and then more specific training over the coming months/ years.

The children won't be able to interact independently with Ivy for some time. She will stay in my office unless she is on a short leash with me and will spend increasing amounts of short time in her crate in our reception area. I will keep you continually updating with her progress.

At the beginning of the term I will send further details such as our school dog risk assessment, and permission forms as appropriate, when the time is right. Ivy has the full insurance and documentation that she needs. Please do speak to me if you have any concerns.

Parents/ Carers in School

One of the challenges of the changes that we are required to make this year is in not having parents and carers freely in school. Previously, we have always welcomed our school community and wider visitors into our school with pride, at any time of the day. This year, to keep our community safe, we ask that you adhere to the new arrangements when dropping and collecting your child/ children.

There will be opportunities to speak with your child's teacher at the end of each day. If you would like to arrange a more private meeting, or to meet with myself or Mrs Opie our SENCO, you can arrange this with the School Office either via email, phone or in person. We ask that we only have one person at a time come into to the school to speak with Mrs Cooper or Mr Robinson.

For the time being, we will continue to have minimal visitors in school and therefore will not require any parent helpers for the Autumn Term.

Social Media

To compensate for parents and carers less freely being able to access the school, see how our classrooms look and to see the learning and activities happening within school, a school Facebook page will be set up for the beginning of the year. In addition to this, a closed Facebook group for current parents/ carers only, will be set up and will show learning and activities involving children for whom we have received consent. I will post photos and videos of each classroom for you to show your child/ children in the days before their return to school.

To ensure that the Facebook page and groups are not overwhelmed with photographs of Ivy, she will have her own Instagram page which you are welcome to follow. Only children with given consent will be shown on Ivy's public Instagram page.

Consent forms will be sent home in the first weeks of term and I will let you know when the Facebook page, group and Instagram pages are up and running.

Anxiety about returning to school

As previously written in my letter to you in July, do let us know if you or your child/ children are feeling anxious about returning to school. If I haven't already spoken to you and you are keen to talk to me, please let me know by calling the school or emailing office@slindonprimary.co.uk

After school clubs

For the first half of the Autumn Term, we will be facilitating after school clubs in keeping with the class 'bubbles'. Further details will be sent during the first week of term.

Swimming

At the time when we would usually have booked swimming for this academic year, public swimming pools had been closed and there was uncertainty as to when they would open. Therefore, we have not booked our usual swimming sessions at Felpham Leisure Centre this year. We will review the option in the new year.

As always, do get in contact if you have any questions before the start of the academic year. We look forward to seeing you all very soon.

Best wishes,

Lucy Cooper
(Headteacher)