

28 August 2020

Dear Parents,

The summer holidays are fast disappearing and we are ready to welcome children back in school; teachers have worked exceptionally hard during their holidays to turn us from a 5 class to a 7 class school and they will be in from Thursday 3rd September to undertake training, ready to welcome back all children on Monday 7th.

We are really looking forward to welcoming all year groups back, especially those we haven't had face to face contact with since March. We were the only school I know of in the Test Valley to have 100% of all Year R, Year 1 and Year 6 children back in the summer term, thank you to those parents for their trust and belief in us. It has really helped us prepare for all children to be back in.

What did we learn that we can use to help all children return?

It was fascinating!

- The overriding sense in the first few weeks was how desperate and pleased the children were to be back to 'normal' and see their friends. Yes, things had changed but the real sense of routine, expectations from school, regularity and friendship massively helped them settle.
- Learning hadn't slipped as much as we'd thought (although we know this won't be true for the older year groups as they've been off much longer).
- Children loved the smaller class sizes. We hope that our small classes of 20 will be as near to this as we can get.
- They got tired – I'm sorry to say it but please expect tired and grumpy children at the end of the first few weeks. We were only open until 1.15pm and they were shattered! Some families reported the reintroduction of afternoon naps so please do prepare for this in your after school routine.
- New friendships formed quickly. Because we were splitting Year R & Year 1, we saw new friendships emerge and children settle with their new group.
- When we had the 'meet the teacher' days for older year groups, some children found it challenging to socialise and interact with their peers, they've simply got out of the habit of doing it and don't want to get it 'wrong' as they know they have to be careful.
- They weren't very independent! This will be even more true for our older children who didn't have the 'in school' time that the younger ones had. Please help us to help your children be more resilient to the expectations we'll have of their need to be independent by reviewing your routines now and encouraging them to do things (including thinking!) for themselves.

I really can't stress how important this last bullet point is. Rightly, your children have relied on you and become an insular unit for the last 5 or 6 months and this is exactly what's helped keep everyone safe but through this, they have become very reliant on an adult to guide them and tell them and do things for them whereas, in a class of 20, we'll need them to be a bit more independent!



Things you can do to help your child prepare for their return to school – now is the perfect time. Preparation for this year's school start is much more than just having the uniform and shoes bought and waiting to be worn! It's about the conversations we have with the children. Imagine how powerful it would be if we ALL did these!

Not worry about academics – it's too late!

They are where they are and we are expecting this to be wildly different so please don't worry and definitely don't let them know you're worried. We'll take them as we find them!

Don't tell them it'll be like it was when they left

It won't be! A lot is the same but we've got new staff, new procedures and new ways of working to keep them, you and us safe. Reassure them that the adults have thought it through and will show them.

Talk about the bumps ahead but don't catastrophise

Life is full of ups and downs. Focus on how resilient everyone has been through lockdown and that resilience is a muscle that needs exercising to get it strong – this is going to be another time to exercise it!

Watch the videos available next Thursday

Your child's class web page on our school website will have a welcome video from their new teaching team. They'll talk your child through what they need, how to come into school and what the day will be like.

Undertake side-by-side activities to create talking space

Difficult conversations are often easier in the car aren't they? Baking, making jewellery, doing a puzzle etc where there isn't explicit focus on them might give you chance to open a conversation on worries.

Practise separation from main caregiver

Can they spend time with grandparents/family friends etc to rehearse separation from their main caregiver? Even for 10 mins; this will give you a 'bank' of positive experiences to reflect on when they're worried about coming in.

If your child has never been happy to separate from you or you know they'll be very anxious, Don't expect this to change immediately! If it is better, brilliant, but at least you'll be prepared! Start to talk about school now. Recognise their fears and worries and validate them – tell them you understand and that lots of other children feel like this, it's totally normal. Perhaps select a transitional object from home that's small and can live in their tray but will remind them of home. Imagine together what the first day might be like and talk through the sensations they might unconsciously be feeling; butterflies, wobbly legs, headaches, flushes etc and normalise these, Create with them or give them space to do on their own, a montage of things they've enjoyed doing at home to share with their teacher.

Other practical things to do:

1. Start to bring bedtimes forward a few minutes each day so that by next Friday you're at school bedtimes.
2. Reduce screen time
3. If your child has been used to snacking when they want, slowly introduce routine to this. Break will be at 10am, lunch at 12noon and then hometime between 3pm – 3.30pm.



September – new guidelines

Our doors will open for children on Monday 7th September. Coming to school from September is no longer optional or open to certain year groups. EVERY child is expected back. Year R children who are joining us from September have their own separate set of dates for return.

Please ensure they bring the following to school on that day:

- a red school Bookbag (not a rucksack)
- the correct uniform, including school shoes, not trainers.
- Packed lunch if they would normally have a packed lunch. Cooked dinners will be available each day. **Please bring in a lunchbox that is clearly named on the outside.**
- PE Kit – all named and labelled. Please check what you have meets school regulations – see our website. **Please bring in a PE drawstring bag, not a rucksack. Please name it on the OUTSIDE.**
- Sunhat – named and labelled
- Suncream – named and labelled
- Any reading books or other school books you have at home.

I cannot stress how important it is to have EVERYTHING labelled – with COVID still present in our society, we cannot hold lost property and want every item of clothing to be returned to its rightful owner, including socks, pants and trainers!

We do not need to collect in any work that they might have been done over lockdown so please do not send it in. We have to limit the amount of equipment which comes in from home.

We will provide:

- a named water bottle for every child
- a pencil case containing all they need for learning
- waterproofs
- wellies
- spare clothes in case of accidents

Start times and leaving times are staggered as follows and there won't be any opportunity (at least to begin with) to gather on the playground – children will come straight into the school building:

START TIMES

8.30 – 8.40am	8.40am – 8.50am	8.50am – 9.00am
Surnames A-G	Surnames H – N	Surnames O - Z

LEAVE TIMES

3pm – 3.10pm	3.10pm – 3.20pm	3.20pm – 3.30pm
Surnames A-G	Surnames H – N	Surnames O - Z

If you are late for either drop off or pick up, please ring the school office who will tell you what time you will be able to come on site from. You won't be able to come in during the next surname 'bubble'. This helps us comply with the Government regulations of limiting numbers onto site.

Entrances for drop offs and pick ups:

	Sprat and Winkle	Redbridge	Kimbridge	Horsebridge	Mottisfont	Fullerton	Clatford
	White Hart gate Sliding door under the porch	Back door to classroom	Old girl's entrance in the red scooter pod courtyard	Back door to classroom	Main door at reception	Hall door	Main door at reception

At the end of the day, please don't linger, we will not be able to release the next group of children if the majority of families are still on site.

- Breakfast Club will run from 7.45am – 8.30am at a cost of £4. Mrs Devereux is coming to run it 3 times a week on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays to provide an even more active start to the day.
- Clubhouse will run from 3.30pm until 6pm every day of the week and is bookable with Miriam (see our website)
- Sarah Seymour (piano teacher) is going to continue piano remotely until at least October half term.
- Kev Rees (guitar & ukulele teacher) will be resuming in school lessons from w/b 14th Sept. More details in Sept.

THERE WILL BE NO OTHER CLUBS IN THE FIRST HALF TERM TO LIMIT THE NUMBERS OF CHILDREN FROM DIFFERENT CLASSES MIXING TOGETHER.

	Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	Sprat and Winkle	Redbridge	Kimbridge	Horsebridge	Mottisfont	Fullerton	Clatford
Teacher	Miss Kirkham & Mrs McInnes	Mrs West & Miss Palk	Mrs Le Fevre & Mrs Hanham	Miss Tregunna & Mrs Holden	Mrs Natt & Mrs Holdich	Mrs McClue (M-Th), Mrs Burnand (Fri) & Mrs Lee	Miss Caws & Mrs Burnand

Booking for Breakfast Club

If you would like your child to attend breakfast club in the first week of term, please complete the form below to indicate your preferences. Because of COVID limitations, breakfast club spaces will need to be booked ahead of the week you'd like your child to attend. **Book here:**

<http://bit.ly/breakfastclubbookingweek1>

Booking for Clubhouse

I know that Clubhouse is already looking quite full and numbers are strictly limited so please do contact Miriam if you have any queries or, if your child is already a user of Clubhouse, book sessions now. All details, including a booking link are on our website:

<http://stockbridgeprimary.co.uk/our-community/clubhouse/>

Masks

We know that the papers and news are rife with the mask debate at the moment so I wish to add some clarity from our perspective at school. We are not expecting children or staff to wear masks in school. We will be asking specialists who visit our school and work closely with children eg. some music teachers, school nurse, occupational and speech therapists to bring a mask with them in case they can't maintain the social distance guidance because of the specific work they need to carry out. Should our local area go into lockdown, staff and pupils will be able to bring masks to wear in communal areas of school – at the moment this is optional but, the guidance changes daily and I will update you if this changes.

Medication

If your child has asthma, uses an epi-pen or needs specific medication, please bring this in on day one. All medication should be in date please.

COVID-19 contact

At the end of the first day, we'll be sending your child home with a flow chart of what to do if you (or we) suspect an outbreak of COVID-19, if you or anyone at home has symptoms or if you are contacted by NHS test and trace. The guidance has changed twice over summer so I'm leaving it until the last minute to send the most up to date advice home!

Send it back

We sent every child home in March with reading books and some children with tablets or a school laptop or chrome book. We desperately need these back so that we can quarantine them, clean them and get them back into circulation. Please ensure that ALL school property is back with us by the end of the first week.

The school website www.stockbridgeprimary.co.uk now has new class pages for our 7 classes. Please keep an eye on these next Thursday evening as we'll be posting the videos from your child's new teachers. If you have any queries in the meantime, please don't hesitate to email or call the school from Thursday 3rd September. We will all be in staff training so we'll pick up calls and emails during breaks and lunch.

Enjoy the last week of holidays, cherish sunny days with your children and know that this time has been special and one we'll all remember (the good, the bad and everything in between) for the rest of our lives. We are so looking forward to seeing you all.

Emma Jefferies
Headteacher

