

17th July 2020

Re-opening of Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Normally at this time of year we are “winding down” as a school. We’ve had our Summer Fair, our Key Stage Two production, the staff team have been fairly trounced (unfairly) at the Rounders Evening, reports have gone home, we’ve had our open classrooms and we’ve finished the year with our Leavers’ Assembly. It feels peculiar that we haven’t been able to do these things as normal and instead of winding down, we are in fact winding back up ready for September re-opening.

We are all really looking forward to welcoming children back into school in September. Seeing children back at school this week for transition has just highlighted that as lovely as it has been to have Reception, Year One and Year Six back – we have not been whole. Robins, Squirrels and Badgers have done a terrific job of keeping our school going – now we are ready for the Hedgehogs, Woodpeckers, Owls and Foxes to join back in and make our team complete.

If you are anything like me, you are bit tired of hearing phrases like “unprecedented times” but it is important to remember that they really are. As a school we have risen to meet challenges that we never thought we’d be facing and come through on the other side showing that our children are resilient, kind, motivated to learn and eager to be in school – they bring to life our mantra of “Believe, Achieve, Succeed.” Likewise, I am fortunate to have a staff team that are brilliant – they never say “No, we can’t,” they always ask, “How can we help?”

We continue to face new challenges and as such when children return to school things will be normal in many respects but there will still need to be some changes. It will be a “new normal” but I believe that, you at home and our team at school, can work together to make sure that September feels as much like previous terms as possible.

We are only able to open school because it has been deemed safe enough to do so. We can never eliminate risk at school but we can work to mitigate it so that school is as safe as we can make it for children and staff.

More than ever, we need to come together as a community so that the measures we put in place at school are effective. Attached to this letter is our plan to reopen in September. Like the plan we sent out for the June opening it is not a short document. It is important though. I want to be sure that we’ve been clear and transparent in what we will be doing at school and what we need families to do, so that by working together we can reduce any risks through the actions we take and to reassure you and your children that while school may be a little different – largely it will be the same.

Please take some time over the summer holiday to read it and talk it through with your child. We will continue to work on the plan through the summer so there may be some small changes that we make but they won’t impact on the substance of the plan. We will be posting videos on the school blog page of our website so that both you and your children can know what to expect when you come in and familiarise yourselves with any new routines.

Bubbles!

There is a lot of talk in the news about “bubbles”. Bubbles are referred to throughout our plan. For us each bubble will typically be one class. There are times when bubbles will need to come together in shared spaces, for example, lunch times.





To minimise the number of adults on site, drop offs and pickups are staggered

Where possible we are encouraging families to drop off and pick up directly at school and avoid using school transport.

Because we only have one entrance to school, we are operating a staggered drop off and pick up. This will be reviewed towards the end of September. It is a change for many families; but in order for us to keep school safe for children and staff it is necessary.

School attendance is compulsory.

All school age children are expected to attend. We will of course work with all families to support children's entry in to school.

Clubs and Breakfast/Afterschool Club

It is very important that we get the processes and routines in place to make school as safe as possible. We will be aiming to offer Breakfast Club and Badgers Afterschool Club from Monday 21st September. This will give us enough time to review what we are doing, check updated guidance and ensure that our wraparound care doesn't impact adversely on our bubbles. We will not be able to offer other afterschool or lunchtime clubs initially. We will review this at half term.

Our plan is written for staff and parents. It is a plan that only works if families work with us in adhering to the government's guidance both in school and out of it. If we, as a community, families, parents and children fail to follow the rules outside of school we put our staff team and children at school at risk.

The plan has been written with current government guidance in mind. The Department for Education hasn't indicated that there will be additional guidance that would alter the plan; however, the current health crisis is a fluid and changing situation. If there is any new guidance or information that alters the substance of the plan we will communicate any changes to you as soon as possible.

As always, be safe, be happy and be well.

Yours sincerely,

Mr King