

# FLIXTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

15<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Parents

Well, this half term has certainly been interesting! In the midst of Covid, and the operational challenges that dealing with the pandemic throws up on a seemingly daily basis, the children have made an excellent start to the new school year. They are taking great pride in demonstrating the Four Bs across every area of school – being ready, being respectful, being responsible and believing in themselves. It has been a pleasure to see the positive start they have made to their new year, and hopefully, as we continue to navigate the various choppy waters of trying to maintain as much normality as possible, this excellent start will stand them in good stead.



Part of that excellence is that they are looking very smart, but please ensure that all clothing is clearly named, as we had a tremendous amount of unclaimed lost property at the end of last year that had to be thrown away again – an expense and inconvenience we really want to avoid. **Lost property will be kept for half a term only** – the first week of each new half term will be 'last chance' week when everything will go – uniform, bags, coats, shoes, umbrellas, swimming kits etc. etc. Sadly this is the only way we can keep on top of things.

PE kit is part of school uniform too, and is very simple – navy blue shorts, a plain white T-shirt and suitable footwear. Football kits or fancy T-shirts are not PE kit. Please make sure your child has their correct PE kit in school when they need it.

Morning and afternoon routines are now well established with only a few latecomers arriving after the start of the school day. If you are running a little late, please use the Department main entrances, as gates to playground areas will be locked. It does occasionally rain in Manchester, so it would be appreciated if children arrive from 8:45, so that they are not waiting around in poor weather for too long before doors open.



If your child is going to be absent from school, please ring us to let us know before 10am on the day. If we haven't heard from you by then, we will contact you. All absences need to be explained by a letter when your child returns to school. Please try to remember to send the note in when your child is well enough to be back in – it makes administering the registers much easier!



The Infant Department end of day procedure has been well re-established – it really helps children if whoever is collecting your child at the end of the day stands in the same place – it makes it much easier to spot you! In the Junior Department, class teachers stagger the departures from the cloakrooms and see the children out safely. If children cannot find their adult, they are told to come back to the cloakroom entrance where members of staff will be. If you would be kind enough to re-emphasise this message, it would be greatly appreciated. If I could also ask that small children, prams, buggies, cycles (no dogs, please) are under your close supervision at all times, that would also be appreciated. Occasionally some small children disrupt the end of the

school day by shouting through classroom windows. We expect **all** children on our playground at the end of the school day to be properly supervised and controlled – it's only fair on the classes still learning in our school.

If you have a child in Year 5 or 6, and you wish for them to walk home on their own, please make sure you have contacted us prior to your child starting to walk home, to ensure we have the details and permissions that we need, in line with the school's Walking Policy.

Please make sure that children know who will be collecting them if there is a change to their normal routine. If you are delayed unexpectedly, a phone call to school prior to the end of the school day (3:15 for the Infant Department; 3:30 for the Junior Department) will enable us to advise your child of change of arrangements. **We are here to help.**

### **MARDALE AVENUE AND DELAMERE ROAD – A PLEA**

As is sadly a regular feature of my newsletters, another gentle reminder we are trying to keep all our children safe. That means everyone needs to be aware that Mardale Avenue and Delamere Road are not designed to turn round in, so driving down them to drop off your children creates hazards and dangers that can be easily avoided. Please park well away from the school, and in a considerate manner.

**Under highway law, it is illegal to park a vehicle so that it obstructs other people wanting to use a road or path. It is also illegal to obstruct a private entrance.**

Please, if you are able to, walk with your children. Fewer car journeys and more walking will help everybody, and our planet too. As the days shorten reflective clothing and bags are common sense – please help us to keep our children safe.

Please use some common sense – keep your car off Mardale Avenue and Delamere Road.

I would also ask that parents do not seek to police the roads themselves – some of our parents have requested the school's understanding of their need to park close to, or in, school grounds because of medical conditions that make extended walking difficult. We are happy to allow this to happen and are aware of those cars.

### **OFFICE ENQUIRIES**



The front office team will be able to answer most queries either by phone (748-5141 – option 1 for the Infant Department, and option 2 for the Junior Department) or in the office – or they will find someone who can! Members of staff will be in the playground at the end of the day as the children are leaving to answer queries, pass on messages, make arrangements etc. For obvious security reasons we ask that adults only access the building via the office entrance not the pupil cloakroom doors. Thank you.

### **CONTACT DETAILS UPDATE**

It is also time for our annual request to inform the office of any changes to contact details, addresses and medical conditions. Please could I ask for you to not forget - if there are any changes (including if you wish to change existing

photo permissions) please let us know as soon as possible so we can update our records. Many thanks for your help with this.



## TEACHING STAFF

The deployment of teachers for this academic year is as follows:

Nursery	Miss H Bermingham
Reception	Mrs K O'Grady and Miss R Eldridge
Y1	Mrs G Bateman and Mrs H Young
Y2	Mrs C Johnson (Deputy Head), Miss E Corker and Miss K Harris
Y3	Mrs A Hopewell and Miss S Buckley Hall
Y4	Miss K Ward and Mrs J Jones
Y5	Miss H Freeman (Deputy Head), Miss E Gerrard and Mr D Broomhead
Y6	Mrs S Spence (Safeguarding Lead) and Mrs J Foster

The school's SEN Lead is Mrs R Kirke.

This term's **parents' evening** will be held on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December**. It is highly likely, given the current circumstances, that the meetings will be held virtually, like last year, and we will be in touch with details nearer the time. In the meantime if you have information to share or any concerns please contact individual class teachers to arrange a meeting or telephone communication as appropriate.

## CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES

Like Parents' Evening, we can only plan with the information we currently have, so our arrangements for Christmas events may well need to alter depending on the prevailing public health situation and guidance nearer the time.

We would love to put on live performances, as we did in 'normal' times, that would see a Reception Christmas Songs, Year 1 and Year 2 Nativities, and Junior Carol Singing, and that is what we are currently aiming for. So, at the moment, it is a case of keep everything crossed, and keep following Public Health guidance, because that is how we can minimise infections and hopefully create a situation where children can perform to a live audience again.



## COVID GUIDANCE

(Because it can't be a proper letter without some!)

There has been some confusion around the advice given by Public Health in the letter sent to out last week, as it made no mention of previous arrangements, such as the PCR test after 3 days.

Public Health Trafford have clarified their guidance:

*The isolation of 3 days before a PCR advice for household contacts has ceased. Household contacts are now advised to go for an initial PCR test as a general contact would be (not being required to isolate for this test).*

We are asking all students and staff members **who live with someone who has Covid** to do daily lateral flow tests (LFD test) before coming into school (unless exempt-see below). Pupils should start this testing from the day their household member either became **unwell with Covid or tested positive** if they did not have symptoms and continue this for 10 days.

Please remember;

- if your child tests negative, they can continue attending school.
- if your child has a positive LFD result, they must start isolating, have a PCR test and inform school.
- if they develop Covid symptoms, they should book a PCR test. It is important that people with Covid symptoms do not rely on a negative LFD test and they should have a PCR test. If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they must not come to school and should remain at home.

### **Exemptions to household testing**

The groups exempt from this advice are:

- Children 5 and under
- Children in Key Stage 1
- SEND schools
- 12–18-year-olds who have had at least one dose of the vaccine more than 14 days ago
- Any child, aged between 5 – 16, who has tested positive for COVID-19 via a PCR test within the past 90 days

I hope that this clarification is useful for you. Please could I remind you to remember to wear masks at drop off and pick up times, and if you are coming into school? This is in line with the guidance issued last week, and is part of a series of measures that Public Health hope will help reduce the current very high rate of infection across the borough.

We have also had to make a few changes to our online learning offer for children who are having to self-isolate because they have Covid. Work will be available on Google Classroom weekly, not daily, and children will not have to upload work they have completed. I am sure you can appreciate that when children are off school with Covid, some are poorly, and some aren't, and the take up of any remote learning we offer is entirely up to parents. This has made it very difficult to manage the system as it previously existed, as the system was originally designed for whole classes of children not being in school, with the overwhelming majority of the children being well enough to access and complete work.

### **TERM DATES 2021-22**

I wouldn't normally, but I blame the Queen for this one! We have made an alteration to our draft Term Dates, because of the double Bank Holiday in June to celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. The celebration has enabled us to alter one of our proposed INSET days, from June to 1<sup>st</sup> November, so that all staff can receive First Aid training en masse, rather than spread across the school year.

This means that children will not return to school after this half term until **TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER**. School will be closed to children on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November.

I have attached the final, definitive Term Dates to the email with this letter, and I apologise for any confusion caused by the change of dates. Please note the start and end of the terms carefully, in case you have seen previous versions of the school year. The school website has also been updated to reflect the definitive dates.

### **PARENTAL SUPPORT**

I would ask for your continued support relating to attendance, punctuality, prompt payment of dinner money, homework, uniform – particularly footwear, jewellery, hairstyles, tailored skirts, correct school trousers, PE kit etc. so teachers and support staff can focus on delivering the very best our school has to offer. I would also just like to comment that we cannot administer cough sweets or medicines for children – such medicines should not be in school. We have over 450 children – you can perhaps appreciate the potential chaos that ‘minor ailment’ medication would cause.

Retailers constantly fight to corner the lucrative uniform market. As we are unable to provide the whole school uniform from two small offices we ask that parents support us in maintaining as consistent a standard as possible – the standard is plain, hardwearing, safe and appropriate for school use – not a fashion statement. We have in the past experienced the tight skirt, the short skirt, the slit skirt, the fleecy skirt, flared trousers, zipped, buckled, keyringed ..... endless variations that are inappropriate. If parents are unsure, please contact school or bring the clothing in before cutting the labels off. We are proud of our uniform – correct shoes and P.E. kit are extremely important. Please ensure that black school shoes are exactly that – black shoes for school, not trainers or any of the many versions of ‘fashionable’ shoes that are not suitable for school.



As well as being proud of our uniform, we are also extremely proud of the exemplary behaviour of our children. Our behaviour policy remains unchanged for this academic year, and is available from the school website for those who would like a copy. I would like to thank you for your continued support in our efforts to ensure that all children have the best possible learning environment, free from disruption.

The first newsletter is always a long one! Thank you for persevering right to the end and I look forward to hopefully having the opportunity to see you at one of our events during what we hope will be a to be another lively, happy and exciting year.



Mr J Redmond  
Headteacher