



Godinton Guide to Reopening September 2020

Monday 20th July 2020

Dear Parents,

Thank you so much for your patience whilst we finalise arrangements for September in line with Government guidance for the full reopening of schools. Whilst many aspects of school life will thankfully resemble normality, there will be a number of measures that we need to put in place in order to meet the expectations; these are outlined in this letter. We are very much looking forward to welcoming all our children back to Godinton and are doing all we can to ensure that they have a safe and welcoming environment to return to.

With all children returning to school in September, your continued support and assistance will be crucial in maintaining the smooth operation of school life and I thank you in advance for your cooperation as we move to the next stage of reopening. The support, cooperation and kind messages from parents throughout this period has been of enormous assistance.

Does my child have to return to school in September?

Yes. School will reopen to all children, in all year groups in September. It is vital that children return to school – for their educational progress, for their wellbeing, and for their wider development. School attendance will again be mandatory from the beginning of the new academic year. For parents of children of compulsory school age, this means that the legal duty on you as a parent to send your child to school regularly will once again apply.

Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1st August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of Covid-19. This means that the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend for a short period of time in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has Covid-19. Further information on this is provided later in the letter.

We understand that some parents and children will be anxious about the return to school. I hope that this letter will provide reassurances about the measures we are taking to support the children and ensure their safety but if anyone has any concerns, please let us know.

When will my child return to school?

All children **currently** in Years R to 5 will return to school on **Wednesday 2nd September 2020** and will be in the next year group i.e. current Year 4 children will be in Year 5 from **2nd September**. They will spend the first 3 days with their 2019–2020 teacher in their 2019–20 classroom and will then move to their new class teacher and classroom on **Monday 7th September**.

Children who will be in our new Year R classes in **September** will start school during the week commencing **Monday 7th September**. Start dates have been sent out to parents.

Will my child be in a bubble?

Yes. In **September**, children in Years 2 to 6 will operate as whole class bubbles. Each class will operate as a separate unit for the majority of their time whilst inside the building. The two classes within the year group will also form a year group bubble. The children will mix across their own year group outside at playtimes and inside for year group assemblies. Some year groups will also have lunch together in the hall. They will not mix with children from other bubbles. Due to the nature of the classroom set up for children in Years R and 1, the children will mix in year group bubbles only both inside and outside.

Will the children need to maintain social distancing?

The children will be able to mix freely within their class and year group bubbles and will not need to maintain a 2m distance from other individuals. We will however be taking steps to limit the face to face contact that the children have with others within their bubbles. The children in Years 2 to 6 will sit side by side, facing forward at their desks rather than sitting around a table in a group. In Year R and 1, there will be some small modifications to classroom layout to limit direct face to face contact where possible. The children will be encouraged to not touch each other.

Staff will be able to support children with their work and engage in play activities with the children in Year R and 1. Staff will support and comfort any children who are upset.

What safety measures will be in place?

Robust measures will be taken with regard to all aspects of safety and virus prevention. Stringent, enhanced cleaning regimes have been prepared, including the additional lunchtime cleaning of key areas.

Children will be taught the rules regarding virus prevention –including what to do if they sneeze or feel unwell and we will continue to enforce hand washing at regular intervals throughout the day. Toilets can be shared between bubbles but will have enhanced cleaning.

Shared areas such as the hall and IT suite will be timetabled in such a way that they can be cleaned after use by one year group bubble. Communal activities such as assemblies will not take place and we will look at using remote technology as an alternative.

How will drop off and pick up work?

This has been our biggest headache and has presented many logistical challenges. In the morning, we have put in place a system in which parents will only need to do one drop off for all siblings. We will have staggered start times and separate entry points for each group to access the site, with one way systems continuing to operate. It will be a similar 'drop and go' system to that which we have been running with those children in school and to how we ran drop off for the after school sessions. The children we have had in school have been brilliant with this arrangement but we will of course support any children who have any wobbles coming in.

At pick up, we are unable to operate a system in which all parents only need to do one pick up for all siblings – with 420 children to see off site, this has proved too difficult to implement. We will have staggered ends to the day with children being collected by parents at the front of school, again in a similar way to the systems that we currently have operating.

The attached document, outlines when your child's drop off and pick up times will be. Please read this carefully. These arrangements have been put in place to control the flow of people coming onto the school site and therefore I must insist that you stick to the time slot you have been allocated and use the entry and exit points assigned to your child. Only one adult will be able to drop off or pick up.

Whilst we get into our stride we will not be able to have bicycles or scooters coming onto site. We will review this arrangement later in Term 1.

Will the classrooms look the same?

Apart from the realignment of desks to enable the children to face forward, the classrooms will be familiar places for the children. Children will be able to share resources within their bubbles. These will be cleaned on a regular basis.

What arrangements are in place for lunch?

School dinners will be available for those children wishing to have one. These will continue to be free for all children in Years R to 2 under the Government's Universal Free School Meals Scheme and to children in any year group entitled to benefit related free school meals. Initially we will only be able to offer a cold packed lunch from the school kitchen. We will keep this under review and may be able to extend menu options as the term progresses. As we are unable to accommodate more than 60 children in the hall at any one time, only Year R and Year 2 will be able to eat in

the hall. All other year groups will eat in their classrooms. Your child may bring in their own packed lunch from home but please try to give the children 'low mess' items as the majority of children will be eating at their desks. If your child brings a yogurt to school, please make sure they have a spoon.

Children in Years R to 1, will be given a free piece of fruit in the afternoon under the NHS Fruit and Vegetables for school scheme.

Will my child be able to play outside at playtime?

Yes. Playtimes will be outside and each year group bubble will have a separate time when they can play on the playground. Whilst the weather is good, we will continue to use the field space as well. Some slight changes have been made to the timings of break times and lunchtimes for each year group.

Will my child need to wear school uniform?

Yes. In September we will return to our full uniform expectations. Uniform does not need to be cleaned any more often than usual.

Children should wear black shoes for school. However, to enable the children to engage in physical activity without the need to change footwear, we would recommend that this is a pair of plain black trainers (no coloured logos).

Please remember that only small stud earrings can be worn to school and that these must be removed for PE activities. If you are thinking of getting your child's ears pierced, please do this at the start of the holidays so that earrings will be able to be removed for PE in September.

What about PE kit?

In September, parents of children in Years 1 to 6, will be told on which day their child will have PE. The children may not have as many PE slots as they would normally due to restrictions, space and timetabling. On these days, the children should come to school dressed in their PE kits. They will stay in these clothes for the duration of the day and PE bags will not be allowed in school. Further information will be provided in September. Children in Year R will not need a PE kit until the summer term.

Will my child need to wear a face mask?

No – face masks must not be worn in school. At the moment, the Government guidance states that face masks do not need to be worn by children in school.

Staff will only wear face masks when administering personal care or when supporting a child displaying symptoms of Covid-19, when a 2m distance cannot be maintained.

What can my child bring to school?

We would like the children to bring as few items to school as possible. They may bring a coat, hat, lunch box, their water bottle and a snack (fruit or vegetables) for morning break. The children can also bring either a book bag or a small draw string bag (like a school PE bag) to put their reading book in. Large rucksacks will not be allowed. Children will be able to take reading books to and from school. The children will be shown where to place returned books in the classroom. Please wipe books with antibacterial wipes before returning them to school.

Please can you all have a hunt at home for any school reading books that you may have and please can these be returned to school on the first three days back.

The children in middle and upper school will be given their own stationary packs containing all essential items. Resources will also be provided for children in Lower School. Children in Years 3 to 6 will need to bring in a small pack of colouring pencils which they will need to keep in school (no more than 12 pencils). They will not be able to bring a pencil case in or any other stationary items.

The children will not be able to bring toys, including footballs to school. Neither will they need to bring hand sanitiser or hand cream.

Children in Year R will need to bring a waterproof jacket and trousers that can be kept in school as well as a pair of wellies. Please ensure that these are named. The children may also keep a small bag of spare clothes in case of accidents on their peg.

The teachers would love to see any Unexpected Adventure Trail work that the children have completed during school closure. If your child would like to bring their book in, they can do so on the first day of term so their teacher will have a look through – we won't have the capacity to mark every piece of work but the teachers will share their feedback with the children. This book will then be sent home with their other school books on Friday 4th September.

Are you able still able to offer Breakfast Club and After School provision?

We will be operating Breakfast Club as of the week commencing Monday 7th September. The children will be kept in year group bubbles in the hall and will be socially distanced from other children. They will stay at their tables in the hall, eat breakfast and then complete activities.

In order to work within the parameters of the guidance, places will be limited in order to keep groups as consistent as possible; priority will be given to those children who attend every day. All parents who are interested in a place for their child will need to complete a new registration form. Further details about Breakfast Club are attached to this ParentMail.

Our After School Club which is run by Kent Play Clubs will also reopen in September. Please contact Kent Play Clubs for further information. Details are available on the school website.

Will extra-curricular activities run in September?

We are currently reviewing whether we will be able to offer after school clubs in September and will let parents know at the start of term.

How will my child's wellbeing be supported as they return to school?

Your child's wellbeing is of crucial importance. We know that some children will be counting the days until they come back to school and are excited at the prospect and that others may be more reticent or have some concerns. I hope that the three transition days at the start of the academic year for our current Year R to 5 children, will help to support the children's return to school and give them the opportunity to settle into routines.

To assist children with the new routines that we have in place, we will be putting some social stories onto the school website over the summer holidays so parents can talk through with their children some of the things to expect. We will send out a ParentMail when these are available.

If anyone has any concerns or issues they have encountered during lockdown that you think we need to be aware of, please contact your child's current teacher via the year group email account.

We will of course do our utmost to provide any support for your child that is needed in order to look after their wellbeing.

Will there be changes to the curriculum?

Yes. We will be making some alterations to the curriculum in September. There will be an increased focus on reading, writing and maths skills throughout the day in order to consolidate learning and to prioritise key skills and knowledge. We will however be maintaining a breadth of subject content within our curriculum, ensuring that the children still have opportunities to enjoy a variety of exciting activities. Learning will still be topic based in the form of Learning Adventures and we will still have STAR week. Some activities will need to be re-thought in line with the guidance, for example large group singing activities are not permitted.

Children in Year 2 will complete their phonics screening in the autumn.

Will interventions still take place?

Yes. Children will be able to participate in intervention activities led by adults in the school in order to support aspects of their learning, development or wellbeing. We are in the process of

exploring how these can take place most effectively. Outside agencies will be able to come into school to work with children e.g. speech and language professionals.

Will there be any changes to the school rules?

Outstanding behaviour will be expected from all our children at all times— they have their own part to play in ensuring that they do not take any actions that would put themselves or others at risk. An addendum has been made to our usual behaviour policy to outline particular rules that will need to be observed at this time. This includes how the children must adhere to rules about hand washing and respiratory hygiene and the expectations of social distancing.

Children will continue to be praised for their amazing achievements and will be offered encouragement and support to motivate and enthuse. Rewards such as house points and STAR awards will resume.

Can I still come into the school to speak to teachers or the school office?

Parents will only be able to come into school if they have an appointment. If you need to drop off medication to the office in the morning, a member of staff on duty will give you access to the school office. All other enquiries or questions will need to be made by email or phone to the school office. The year group emails will remain active in September and we will advise parents in September as to how these will be used.

What should I do if my child is unwell?

Please continue to encourage good virus control practices at home including stringent hand washing. Talk to your child about the things that they can do to discourage the spread of infection including the ‘catch it, kill it, bin it’ approach to respiratory hygiene.

In line with Government advice, you should keep your child at home if they develop **any COVID-19** symptoms for 7 days. Symptoms include:

- A new continuous cough, a high temperature, a loss of smell or taste

Please contact the school immediately and take your child for testing. If their test is returned as negative, then they may return to school once they are well enough to do so. If their test is positive you will be advised as to the measures you need to take. Please notify the school in the event of a positive result as we will then take advice from PHE as to the measures we need to take. Please be aware that if a child or adult in school has a confirmed case of COVID-19, all children in the bubble will be required to self-isolate as a precaution, this includes the children of key workers. The school will adhere to the Government’s guidance on how to manage these

situations. Any child who displays symptoms of COVID-19 at school will be isolated and sent home. Parents will be advised on the steps they should then take.

If any child receives a positive Covid test during the school holiday, we would be grateful if you could make us aware. I can be contacted at headteacher@godinton.kent.sch.uk

Guidance is provided on the Government website on the measures that should be taken if someone in the child's household becomes unwell.

In September, the usual arrangements will apply for notifying the school with regard to absence. If children have sickness or diarrhoea then they must not return to school for 48 hours.

Please be aware that these arrangements may need to be amended if Government guidance changes before the start of the new academic year. I will of course keep parents updated.

I am sorry that there has been a lot of information to assimilate but I want to give you as much information as possible. Thank you again for your continued support. We look forward to seeing our school community back together again in September.

Kind regards

Jill Talbot

Headteacher