



Dear Parents, Carers, Families of Cockton Hill Junior School,

I hope you are all enjoying your summer holidays so far! It certainly was needed for all children, staff and families I am sure!

After a year to remember, we are now planning to return to some normality in schools from September. As you are aware, restrictions have gradually lifted, however, we have chosen to return to school with some caution while we assess how the return impacts on the health and safety of all. It is expected that the summer holidays will act as a 'fire-break', but no one can be certain about what the situation will be in the Autumn term.

We have now received guidance and advice from the Local Authority so we can ensure we manage the risks effectively. I wanted to write to let you know of some small changes we will be making to our daily routines for next year. We are starting with small changes so we can see the impact of these before gradually moving towards more of a normal school day for us all.

Changes to procedures now mean that if your child has close contact with someone who has a positive PCR test result, they no longer need to isolate and can continue to attend school as normal. This is a significant change in policy for schools, so we would like you to continue to let us know if your child is a close contact so we can monitor ourselves how this may affect any outbreaks which may occur in school.

If your child shows symptoms themselves, please take them for a PCR test and keep your child at home, isolating. Please ring the school office and/or email school to let us know the situation and the result of the test when it arrives. If negative, your child can return to school – even if they feel better they cannot return to school until they have a negative PCR result. A positive result will mean they need to complete a 10-day isolation period.

Our school risk assessment will be shared on the school website as soon as it is agreed by governors, the Senior Leadership team and school staff.

So now to our day-to-day protocols...

Start of the Day

The start of the day routine with the staggered entry has proved very successful and is something we are going to continue moving forward. The gate will be open from 8:40am but will return to shutting at **8:55am** so learning can begin promptly at 9am. I am sure this will not affect the majority who are here eager to learn well before that time. Nova and a member of SLT will be on the gate daily so if you have any questions, please just catch us.

End of the Day

We will be returning to all classes leaving the school at the same time – 3:15pm. Therefore, children will leave school as follows:

Year 3 – from the Y3 door at the top of the yard

Year 4 – from the Y4 door on the side of the school

Year 5 – from the Y5/6 door on the side of the school (leave second)

Year 6 – from the Y5/6 door on the side of the school (leave first)

Attendance

The school's target for attendance is to exceed 97%. Attendance and lateness will be strictly monitored. It is certainly the case that poor attendance impacts progress and I therefore ask that you do all you can to promote the importance of high attendance. Please be aware, that I am unable to authorise holidays during term time and therefore holidays during school weeks will be classified as unauthorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Punctuality is also important and monitored very closely. Rewards for classes and children with high attendance will be in place from September.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast club will continue to be offered as a free service from 8am. Children will come in through the main entrance and will have their breakfast in year group bubbles. We do hope to be able to bring the school together for breakfast club and will do this as soon as we have the guidance which allows us to do so.

Uniform

A reminder that uniform is a white t-shirt or polo shirt, a red jumper or cardigan, black or grey trousers or skirt or a red checked dress. This can be with or without school logos. All footwear is to be plain black shoes or plain black trainers.

Face Masks

You may now get to see our smiles! When outside, face masks will no longer need to be worn. We would be grateful that if parents/carers need to enter the building, you continue to wear a face mask out of respect for our school staff.

Infection Protection and Control

It will be just as important, in order to minimise the spread of Covid-19, that any child with symptoms, does not attend school and that the family complies with current guidelines on testing and isolation. Although whole classes will not be isolating if one child tests positive, we will need to monitor the situation closely should there be a larger outbreak. If a child does present with symptoms of Covid-19 whilst in school, they will still be isolated, and parents/carers will be contacted to come and collect them immediately. We will continue with thorough and regular cleaning and with ensuring rooms are well ventilated.

Bubbles

Initially, our plan is to keep year group bubbles as this is the normal routine now for the children. This will remain under review as we look towards re-introducing the different pupil voice groups and also building learning groups to enhance all children's progress.

Unfortunately, children did not get the chance to meet their new teachers at the end of term. Below is confirmation of who new teachers are:

Teacher 20/21	NEW teacher 21/22
Mrs Harnaman (Class 6)	Mr Ball (3C)
Miss Blair (Class 5)	Miss Legge (3H)
Mr Ball (3C)	Miss Trow (4C)
Miss Legge (3H)	Miss Robson (4H)
Miss Trow (4C)	Mrs Farlow (5C)
Miss Robson (4H)	Mrs Sheppard (5H)
Mrs Farlow (5C)	Mrs Simpson-May (6C)
Mrs Sheppard (5H)	Mrs Wood (6H)

Hand Washing and Sanitising

We will continue with regular hand washing and sanitising throughout a school day. This is good hygiene and is something I am sure will be in place for a long time to come!

Water Bottle

Please make sure your child brings a named water bottle to school. No juice or fizzy drinks please! Keeping well hydrated is important no matter the time of year or the wider strategies in place.

Large Group Meetings

Whilst bubbles are in place, we will continue to have our assemblies remotely. We do hope we can come together to celebrate as a school very soon.

Parents/Carers in School

We do hope we can welcome you back into school this term and have already provisionally planned a series of events for you which remain dependent on school risk assessments:

WB 20.9.21 – Parent Reading Workshops

Come and sign up for Go Read, get some advice on hearing your child read at home, take a visit to the local library and spend time in the class sharing a book with the teacher and doing some fun activities. Everyone who attends will get a free reading treat.

WB 11.10.21 – Food Week

16th October is World Food Day

Children will be using this special day to look at healthy foods, foods around the world and also discuss the issue of food waste. Parents will be invited in for one afternoon to share in these activities with their children.

WB 11.10.21 – Parents Evening

We hope we can do these in the school hall so we look forward to seeing you all for a catch up about your child's work and how they have settled in.

Dates for after October Half term (including Christmas) will be sent out in the first few weeks of term. **Please note, these are subject to change once guidance has been provided.**

Trips, visitors

Staff will be planning opportunities for children to get out and about in the community across the year. Enriching the curriculum for all children is so important and we hope we can help children to experience their learning first-hand on regular occasions. Once we have a plan for these, we will let you know.

Again, we do not know what is around the corner, so should government advice change, we will let you know as soon as we can (but please remember that schools are often frustratingly given news at exactly the same time as parents!) The information in this letter is only correct at the time of writing and there may have to be some alterations with new guidance provided to schools – we will endeavour to keep these as limited as possible.

If you have any questions, queries or comments, please direct these to the school email (c.h.j@durhamlearning.net) and I will pick them up as soon as possible.

We hope you are having a lovely summer and are continuing to keep yourselves and your families safe!

Best wishes,

Anna Caine
Acting Head Teacher