



Monday 24th August 2020

Newsletter Number 1 – Autumn Term 2020

Dear families,

I hope that you have had a healthy and calm summer. The staff and I are very excited about the full opening of school next week on Wednesday 2nd September. It has been so long since we have all been together and we need to be together. School just hasn't been the same and the 'buzz' of learning, laughter and talk is something we cannot wait to experience again.

Last term, the final newsletter detailed some of the changes for September, that we have put in place to keep everyone as safe as we can. I have included that information at the end of this letter again. However, as we approach the start of the term, we all understand that there may be questions that have not yet been answered and I want to give families the opportunity to raise those questions.

Please take some time to read the points already detailed in this letter and if you have any questions that haven't been covered, email them to the school office email account;
schooloffice@pensbyprimaryschool.org.

The staff and I will answer your questions and email them out to families as a letter, at the latest on Monday 31st August. Additionally, in the next newsletter there will be information for families about how to access breakfast and afterschool club from September. Families who require a breakfast or afterschool club place must pre book places.

Keep safe, keep well,

Mrs. K Brown
Headteacher

INFORMATION IN LAST NEWSLETTER – 9th JULY 2020

Who should attend school in September?

Primary schools in England fully open in September and attendance for all pupils is compulsory. Pensby Primary will reopen to pupils on Wednesday 2nd September.

What time should my child arrive at school and what time will they leave school?

Mornings and afternoons will be a little different for a while. The school gate will be unlocked at 8.30am and locked at 9.00am. You can arrive at any time within this time slot. You will walk your child to their outside classroom door and they will enter their classroom. There are signs on the playground indicating where adults must stop. The gate will be locked at 9.00am promptly.

If you arrive after 9.00am you will need to wait at the gate until the classroom staff can arrange for someone to come and open it. This may mean you will be waiting for some time so prompt arrival at school is essential.

At the end of the day the gates will be opened at 3.00pm and locked at 3.30pm. Again, you can come and collect your child at any point in that half hour slot, walking to their classroom door to collect them.

If you arrive after 3.30pm you will need to wait at the gate until the classroom staff can arrange for someone to come and open it. This may mean you will be waiting for some time so prompt arrival at school is essential.

I'm looking forward to chatting to other parents at the school gates again!

You will not be able to stand in groups and chat at the start and end of the day as you used to. All adults must leave the site promptly after arrival or pick up, adhering to social distancing guidelines.

Can I chat to the staff at the gates?

We need to keep everyone safe. Of course we like to greet you and say hello. However, if you have something you need to talk about you should email or call the school office. All adults on site need to adhere wherever possible to social distancing of 2 metres.

How can I walk my child to school and out of school safely?

We are very lucky with the space we have in our school. When using the paths stick to the sides and keep to the left. There are red arrows on the main path indicating the direction you should go. To keep pedestrian traffic to a minimum, only one adult should bring their child/ren to school or collect them.

The school office will be there to help me if I need to pop in

Of course our office staff is here to help. Please only approach the school office in an emergency. If you do come to the school office, the staff will assume you have an emergency and ask you what your emergency is. If they feel it is not an emergency they will ask you to leave the school site and contact the school instead by email schooloffice@pensbyprimaryschool.org or call 0151 348 4145. Please be polite to the staff at this difficult time. The glass hatch will not be opened in order to protect the office staff so conversations will be very difficult.

If your child needs to be sent home from school due to illness, the office staff will contact you. You will be allowed to park in the drop off point/car park whilst you collect your child. A member of the class staff team will then bring your child to the main school gate.

If your child has an appointment, or you need to pick them up early for any reason, please notify the school office preferably via email schooloffice@pensbyprimaryschool.org or via Parent Mail with a copy of the appointment letter if possible. Arrivals and departures within the school day will be very difficult for the office team to organise as there are less of them on site each day so that social distancing can be

maintained for their safety. Therefore you may be waiting for quite some time and will need to be patient and understanding that we are doing all we can.

If your child is ill, please phone the school office and leave a message on the answerphone before 8.30am. Please do not send messages through Seesaw about child absences/appointments. You must indicate if they have any COVID symptoms.

If your child forgets any equipment/clothing you will not be allowed to send this into school later on in the day. The only items that will be allowed into school later will be essential items such as medicines or glasses.

If your child forgets their packed lunch they will be provided with a school lunch and you will be charged accordingly.

What will my child's classroom look like?

Most of the classroom furniture has been removed to create extra space. The children will be sat at tables in rows, shoulder to shoulder facing the front, as stated in the DFE guidance (it will be different in EYFS). There will be a 2 metre gap at the front and side of the classroom so that adults can be socially distanced wherever possible. Classroom staff can help pupils but cannot be closer than 2 metres to them for more than 15 minutes.

For some of the larger classes, a small group of pupils will need to be sat in the atrium for their lessons. This group will change weekly. As the classes are well staffed, any groups in the atrium will be directly supported to ensure they receive exactly the same curriculum as those in the classroom.

Each class is in its own bubble. Classes will not be mixing. Classes will have specific playground areas and different playtimes.

There will continue to be enhanced hand washing in place and desks will be sanitised several times a day. Each class will have a male and female toilet allocated to it. No items will be kept in the cloakroom areas. Coats will be placed on each child's chair. Additionally only pumps/trainers and jogging bottoms need to be sent in as a PE kit. PE kit will be kept outside the classroom areas

Will staff and pupils be wearing PPE?

There is no requirement for anyone to wear PPE. However, if staff or children do wish to wear masks we will support this.

What will be taught?

For the first week we want to help the children settle back into school. Staff will be organising a range of wellbeing activities that will be enjoyable and address any concerns pupils may have. Following that the staff will be assessing pupils to find the gaps in their learning. More emphasis will then be placed on teaching to close those gaps, particularly in English and maths. However, a broad and enjoyable curriculum is essential so this will be delivered as best we can within the DFE guidelines.

For the first half term at least, there will be no homework set except asking you to support your child with their reading, time tables and spellings at home.

When are parents evenings and when can we see our child's work?

We do not know yet how we will organise parents evenings in the autumn term. We will wait to see what the DFE guidance is nearer the time. We are very proud of the high quality work our pupils do in their books and they love sharing them with their families. We will think of some way we can achieve this special event. When you do see your child's books, you will notice that marking is usually just a tick. This is because staff have been instructed to handle books minimally and wear gloves (that makes marking very difficult). Your child will be receiving verbal feedback more than ever to help them know how they are doing.

What will happen at lunchtime?

The kitchen will be fully open and you can send your child to school with a packed lunch or they can have a school lunch. When the children arrive in class each day they will order what they want to eat at lunchtime.

All pupils in Reception, Year 1 and year 2 are eligible for Universal Free School Meals (UFSM). Children eligible for FSM can also have a free school lunch. Paid lunches for other pupils cost £2.20 per day. Payment for school lunches must be made through Parent Mail.

All classes will eat their lunch in their class bubble. All meals will be delivered directly to each classroom.

What should my child wear for school?

We expect all children to be wearing full school uniform in September. This comprises:

White polo shirt (polo shirts with school emblems are available from our supplier www.gooddies.co.uk). Plain polo shirts can also be worn and are available from many retail outlets)

School tie (optional)

Black trousers, shorts or skirts

Burgundy Sweatshirt or cardigan with the school logo- these are available from our supplier www.gooddies.co.uk.

Black footwear this can be trainers but they must be totally black. No exceptions!

Will my child bring a reading book home?

Children in Nursery, Reception, year 1, year 2, year 3 and year 4, will bring home a pack of reading books. These will stay at home for the whole of the half term. We will ask for them to be returned just before half term. These are the books you can read with your child. In years 5 and 6, they will have reading books in school and the staff will ask them to read a range of reading materials at home with you such as online books, articles, newspapers, leaflets etc.

Will breakfast club and after school club be open?

Yes. We will be operating both Breakfast and After School club. The facilities will be run slightly differently and we will share that with those families that book a place. You can book places online and pay for them from Monday 13th July through Parent Mail.

What do I do with the home learning equipment and work my child was doing whilst they were not in school?

If your child is currently in school, you can send that equipment back to school from Monday 13th July. If your child is returning in September please bring it with you on the first day.

Will families still be able to use Seesaw like they do now?

We have found Seesaw an invaluable tool during the lockdown period and phased return of key worker pupils. From both an academic and social point of view, it has been so beneficial to share and engage in each child's learning journey and we thank you all for your continued support and effort in keeping us up to date. Seesaw has allowed us to keep in touch at a time when we have missed you all so very much, and staff have found the regular contact extremely useful during this difficult time for us all. A simple glance at the class journals demonstrates what resilient children we have at Pensby Primary and we are very proud of all that has been achieved during this time.

Naturally, with full classes back in September, we feel that now might be the right time to refocus our use of Seesaw in preparation for the new academic year as it would be inconceivable to think that we could continue using Seesaw in the same way when our entire school community comes back together again.

What you can expect from us:

- As a school we realised that there were so many learning opportunities that we just weren't able to capture in books or with photographs. As a result, staff were asked to use Seesaw at least twice a week to post evidence of work across each of the subject areas, showing paired or group work and capturing moments of celebration, so that you were able to share in your child's learning.
- Seesaw is operated between the hours of 8:30-4:30 for the purpose of sharing your child's learning or for reminders from teaching staff about upcoming events. Sadly, it cannot operate as a messaging service either during these hours or after these hours so messages will be responded to with an automated reply.

What we expect from you:

- Seesaw gives you instant access into your child's day and their learning opportunities. Through the like and comment options, you are able to share in the successes and achievements of your child through their online journals, enabling you to strike up conversations at the end of the day.
- Correspondence between parents and class teachers should be made via the school office as Seesaw is not checked throughout the day when staff are teaching. Please send all messages to the school office who will pass the information on to the necessary people.
- Seesaw is operated between 8:30 and 4:30 as a tool to share your child's learning and should not be used for complaints or even the slightest niggles. All complaints should follow the school's complaints procedure and should be referred to the school office or Mrs Brown or Mrs Wright who are on the gate each morning.

My child is really worried about coming back to school. What can I do?

We understand that some children will be worried about coming back to school after such a long time. Please email the school office if this is the case and we will arrange for your child's new teacher to contact

you to discuss how we can help. Most children will just be very excited to see their friends again and be back in school – but probably not as excited as their grown-ups are that they are back in school!