

# Chelmondiston Church of England Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Lesley Etchingham



27<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope that you have had a good summer after what has been a very strange few months. As Chelmondiston's new headteacher, I am delighted to be welcoming all children back – and of course, our new Reception pupils, on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September and I am sure that you will have lots of questions about how we will be managing our re-opening. I apologise in advance if this letter is a long one, but there are many things to clarify. On Tuesday, staff will be trained to ensure that our procedures are safe and I am sure that as more government guidance is released and we develop and refine our routines, some things may change further in order to keep everyone safe. We will keep you informed as this happens.

Before I delve into the nitty-gritty of the measures we are taking, I would like to assure you that we are very excited to welcome our pupils to school. All staff are very aware that the experiences of lockdown for everyone will have been completely different and while some children might be excited about seeing friends again and getting back to routines, others may have concerns and find the return to routines difficult. For our youngest pupils, this will be their first experiences of school and we want everyone to enjoy their return. We have been busy preparing a very different September start: we will not be resuming our usual curriculum until after the first two weeks. Instead, our focus will be on well-being, re-igniting friendships, acquainting ourselves with routines, being outside as much as possible and being CREATIVE! Our approach to the more formal aspects of the curriculum will involve 'short burst' skills, with plenty of re-capping. Sharing stories and poems will also be an important part of our return to school-based learning.

And now for the nitty-gritty:

## **Will there be 'bubbles' to keep groups of children apart?**

- As we are a small school with shared toilet facilities between classes, we will operate as two bubbles. Cygnets (Reception/Year 1) and Melissa (Year 2) will operate as one bubble. KS2 will operate as another bubble. Where possible, classes will be kept separate. Because we are a small school, some staff will need to work across the bubbles and have guidance to follow.
- The bubbles will be kept separate at play times. Rotas will be used for the play equipment, which allow for quarantine time/disinfecting between crossing bubbles.
- Younger children are not expected to be able to socially distance. Where it is possible, we will encourage older children to do this.
- Staff will ensure that all children are supported to adjust to any new routines and procedures.

### What do I need to know about the start of the school day?

- We will be operating one-way systems. Please see the attached map. To reduce the number of people on site, we ask that one adult brings each pupil onto the premises, then follows the one-way system and leaves via the gate leading to St Andrew's Drive. Enter via the entrance for your youngest child.
- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will enter via the gate at the left side of the front of the school. Scooters and bikes can be left in the bike shed.
- KS2 children will enter via the gate at the right of the car park. It is your choice as to whether you would like to accompany your child (and then leave via the St Andrew's Drive gate) or send them in to walk to the KS2 entrance on their own. To ensure we can all adhere to the one-way system, bikes and scooters will need to be left against the fence/hedge. (See map)
- We will be operating a 'soft' opening time of 20 minutes which means that children can be dropped off between 8:40am and 9am. This is to prevent large numbers of children entering the building at the same time and to maintain a steady flow of adults entering and leaving the site. Please adhere to social distancing rules as necessary. **On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September, this time will be extended: we ask that children arrive between 8:30am and 9am** – this is to give them a little more time as they get used to new routines. **It is very important that children do not arrive late as the gates will be locked at 9am.** After that, children will need to enter by the front entrance and will be marked as late in the register.

### What do I need to know about the end of the school day?

- **Pupils in Cygnets and Edith May will leave at 3:25pm. All other classes will leave at 3:30pm**, in succession. Please ensure that you adhere to social distancing rules of 2 metres if there are any queues when you collect your child(ren). Year 6 pupils who have written permission to leave on their own (via Dojo or email) will leave first to reduce possible congestion.

### Which entrances and exits will Early Bird and Late Bird clubs be using?

- Both clubs will be starting on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September and places must be booked in advance via the school office. (admin@chelmondiston.suffolk.sch.uk)
- Pupils will enter via the front entrance in the morning and go straight to the hall, taking their belongings with them. To ensure that the two bubbles do not mix, there will be two separate activity stations. At the end of the day, pupils will leave via the KS2 door that leads to the field. Please ensure that social distancing rules are adhered to when you collect your child(ren)

### What hygiene measures are in place?

We have many hygiene measures in place, including:

- On entering school, children will use hand sanitiser/wash their hands – we will be establishing routines for this that the children will soon get used to.
- Children are expected to wash their hands multiple times throughout the day.

- Toilets and touch points will be cleaned during in the day.
- We have plenty of tissues and will remind children about good nasal hygiene. Lidded bins will be used and children will be encouraged to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it' .
- Equipment will be disinfected/quarantined according to government guidance.
- If your child becomes poorly, you will receive a 'phone call to arrange the immediate collection of your child. You will be advised as to where to collect her/him.

#### **Will the classrooms and learning be different? What should children bring to school with them?**

- Tables have been arranged in rows so that children are all forward facing.
- We will provide all children with their own stationery pack.
- PE kits should be brought in on Monday and will be taken home on Friday.
- Children can either bring a packed lunch or have a school meal. Please ensure your child brings a named waterbottle.
- We will be having virtual assemblies (using the interactive white boards) to enable children to worship and share learning as a whole school.
- We will be taking children outside to learn and play frequently, whatever the weather, so please ensure your child has a coat (weather depending). If the weather is hot, please apply sun cream before school. **Ensuring all uniform is clearly labelled will help us return found items efficiently and hygienically.**
- We have made some adjustments to learning activities to reduce the possible transmission of the virus. E.g. children will not sing in Music lessons or assembly.

#### **How will you help the children 'catch up'?**

- Our priority is well-being.
- When the children have settled in, their teachers will gather information (through observation, assessments and activities) to establish any gaps in learning that need to be addressed. The curriculum will be adjusted as necessary to support recapping learning as well as enabling children who have made rapid progress to continue to be challenged. We will also be sending out information on how you can help at home, in due course.

#### **How can I communicate with the school?**

- You will not be able to speak to your child's teacher face to face if you have a question or something you'd like to tell the teacher, as we would all prefer. If you have a query, however small, please use Class Dojo/Tapestry in the first instance. Please be aware that teachers will respond when they are next working online, which may be the next working day and will not be in the evening or at weekends. If you require an immediate reply, please contact the school office. In the second instance, please email the school office if you would like to speak to your child's teacher and then they will be able to call you at a convenient time.
- Please note that all deliveries (monies, letters etc.) must be made via the school letterbox – do not send items with your child.

#### **What other aspects of learning and safety are being considered?**

- To reduce the possibility of home/school virus transmission, we intend that homework will be set and submitted online. The success of using Class Dojo during lockdown as a way of strengthening home school communication is something we would like to build on. After our PD Day training, we will be providing more information about homework and other aspects of learning like recording home reading and bringing reading books to school, which may be different for each class. Watch this space!
- After school clubs will be for the separate bubbles.

NB Please ensure that we have your most up-to-date contact details in case we need to contact you during the school day. **It is essential that we have two contact numbers for you.**

**New Parents** – thank you to those who have already returned the pack of contact details and permission forms. If you haven't yet returned this, please do so as soon as possible as it is essential that we have this information before your child starts on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Thank you.

The government requires that one member of staff on site has been Paediatric First-Aid Trained – almost all staff at Chelmondiston will have had this training by Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

I am glad that I pre-warned you that this would be a long read – thank you for keeping going!

We are expecting the launch of our brand new website in the next few days and we can't wait to have pictures of children looking smart in their uniforms to brighten the pages.

The school office will be open on the two staff training days (Tuesday and Wednesday) if you need to purchase school uniform items. Mrs Whayman will be setting this up so it is Covid friendly and you will be asked to wait outside (socially distanced, of course).

The following link includes up-to-date advice from the government to help parents/carers support young people with their well-being:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak> For any general questions about Corona Virus see: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Please share the information in this letter with your child, as appropriate. We appreciate your support as we all work together to keep everyone safe.

Finally, I want to reassure you that whatever the next few months hold, staff at Chelmondiston will continue to make sure that children are safe, happy, engaged in learning and reaching their potential. If you have any questions regarding this information or anything else, please email the school office.

Best wishes,

*Lesley Etchingham*  
Headteacher

Chelmondiston safeguards and promotes the welfare of pupils and requires all staff and visitors to share this commitment

