

Dear Charles Darwin children, mums and dads

24 August 2020

I hope you have had as good a summer holidays as possible in these circumstances and made the most of the decent weather when we had it, I know lots of you have got really good at riding your bikes and that the reopening of parks was brilliant!

As you know the government has asked schools to plan for the return of all children from September and your teachers, teaching assistants and all school staff are, like me, really looking forward to seeing you all again as well as getting to know our new Reception children.

Our absolute priority is the health and safety of our children and our school community. In this newsletter I aim to provide details regarding return to school arrangements. I hope this makes you and those you live with feel confident and happy about starting school again. You will also find attached a letter from CWAC's Director of Public Health and have seen lots on the news about making the return to school as safe as possible.

- School begins on Wednesday 2 September.
- All children are to wear full school uniform. On PE days (you will be told these by teachers in their welcome letters) you can come to school in PE kit and stay in it all day.
- In line with government guidance masks and personal protective equipment will not be worn in school.
- Doors and windows will be open at all times so bring a coat; to be kept in your classroom as cloakrooms will not be used.
- If you have lunch or snack from home, you can bring it in regular lunchbox which only you will touch.
- All children to have a named water bottle which only they will touch.

There will be staggered start and ends to the school day in order to minimise social contact.

Reception plans for first two weeks

- Reception children to be dropped off and be picked up from front gates to car park for the first week, drop off at 9.10am pick up at 12.00pm.
- Half Reception class in on Wednesday 2 September morning until 12pm, other half in on Thursday 3 September morning until 12pm; Reception parents have already had a letter saying which day. All Reception children in on Friday 4 September morning until 12.00pm.
- All Reception children to do every morning week Monday 7 to Thursday 10 September, starting at 9.00am finishing at 12.00pm and then Friday 11 September to stay for lunch and be picked up at 1.00pm. Drop offs and pick ups from Park St or Darwin St.
- Reception children to begin full time from week beginning 14 September.

Regular school day hours

- **Rec, Y1 and Y2 School day: 9:00am – 2:55pm. (Rec arrangements as above for first two weeks)**
- **Y3 and Y4 School day: 8:50am – 3:05pm.**
- **Y5 and Y6 School day: 8:40am – 3:15pm.**

Please arrive just before going in /pick up times with only one adult per family and please observe social distancing when on pavements.

Park St and Darwin St gates used for all. I know you understand we are unable to have parents on site; children will be taken by staff to clear lining up areas and will sanitise hands on entry and will be handed back to parents at the gates at designated end of school time.

Parent / school communication

If you need to pass on a message to your child's teacher you can do that through me or Marianne Bennett at the gates, other communication will be through email and telephone with any face to face meetings being pre-arranged. Thank you for your support.

Snack and lunch

The school kitchen will provide snacks and dinners which will be brought to children in the classrooms / outside. We will provide hot food but it will be of the sort that can be served in picnic bags; menus will be shared with you in advance. Snacks and lunches may continue to be brought from home with each child then being the only person to touch it. Lunch and snacks will be eaten outside or in the classroom with a midday assistant assigned to each class.

Bubbles

As you will know it has finally been universally agreed that young children cannot really social distance! This means the "bubble" arrangement that was successfully in place before the summer will continue but with bubbles consisting of a whole year group rather than a maximum of 15 children. This means children can learn and socialise in their classes and if necessary across both classes in a year group with teachers and teaching assistants supporting all children; for example, in phonics groupings. This is vital if we are to meet the needs of *all* children and help any who have fallen behind with any aspects of their learning. Each bubble will have allocated toilets.

If a child or member of staff displays Covid symptoms they will be isolated within school immediately and then told to go for a test and remain home and await the test result. If the test comes back positive, then all other members of that bubble will then have to self-isolate as per guidelines. If a family member exhibits symptoms, then children of that household will remain at home for the designated period. We will ensure that home learning is provided for any children not in school for Covid reasons.

Classrooms

All children except Reception will sit facing the front of the class for the majority of the time, although this sounds proper "old school" it is in line with guidance. All children will have their own tray / folder of personal resources. Please do not bring anything from home. We will not be using communal areas like cloakrooms so coats and bags will be kept in classrooms on back of chairs.

We will all need to learn to be better at keeping snacks and lunches away from Dexter!

Cleaning

Children will sanitise hands on arrival and be encouraged to wash them regularly throughout the day. Use of communal areas will be kept to a minimum and door handles, banisters, toilets etc will be cleaned regularly throughout the day. Children's tables and chairs will be cleaned at break and lunchtime as well as at the end of the day. Any other resources used will be cleaned regularly and quarantined before passing to a different bubble.

Reading Books

Children to take book(s) home on a Monday and return to school on a Thursday (not brought in daily). Books will then be quarantined for at least 72 hours before being returned to the book area.

Children can share books from class book corners and these can be supplemented from the library but must be quarantined before returning.

Marking

All books to be kept in school. Children to continue to self-assess against learning objectives and adult marking to be kept to a minimum. Adults will provide verbal rather than written feedback.

Assemblies

Whole school gatherings will no longer take place although "bubble" assemblies will still be held.

After School Clubs and Darwin's Den

There will be no after school clubs for the first half term. Darwin's Den wraparound care will resume in September with social distancing to be done as much as possible between children from different bubbles.

Hopefully you have found this information both useful and reassuring; my staff and I are desperately keen to get Charles Darwin back up and running and look forward to welcoming all members of our school community back safely and efficiently.

If you have any queries or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me, I look forward to seeing you next week.

Very best wishes

Adam Croft