

GILLESPIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Tuesday 16th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are well and that you and your loved ones have kept safe and healthy during this lockdown period. As you know from Monday 22nd June children in Reception Class are scheduled to return to school. In this letter we would like to outline what our approach to teaching will be like for the children who are returning to school, and how we will continue to work with families from both Nursery and Reception to support home learning.

Children returning to Reception Class:

- Children will be split into two pods, each with a maximum of 15 children. **Laura** will be the teacher for **Pod A**, and **Lily** will be the teacher for **Pod B**. There will be one teaching assistant supporting in each pod with the teacher. Please see the attached document with the list of children in each pod.
- As I am sure you can appreciate it is not possible to accept requests from parents about the social placing of their child being with certain friends. As a school we have risk assessed and will make decisions based on the needs of all of the children returning to school to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all children is as always at the forefront of what we do.
- The school day will have a basic structure which will be different to what the children are used to, both pods will have a visual timetable to use with the children to visually represent the planned structure for the day. Please see below a basic outline of the day so that you can begin to talk about this with your child if they are returning to reduce any potential anxiety.
 1. In the morning children will be collected by their teacher from the football playground at **9.20am**. Please be on time –we are staggering entry for three classes in the morning –so being early will not help ! Please keep social distance! **Pod A and Pod B** is marked in the playground with crosses marked for children to stand on. The children will wash their hands in our newly installed sinks in the playground before being taken round to the classrooms. Please pick up your children at **3.00pm** from the football pitch –the staff will bring the children back to their pod space, again please be on time and take your children promptly as the next class will be collected at 3.10 pm.
 2. They will come into their classroom which will either be the Reception room or the Nursery room, they will hang their coats and bags up and have a morning registration.
 3. There will be a short whole class ‘carpet session’ input delivered by the teacher, and then the children will get ‘choosing’ and will have free flow time whereby they can self-select from the activity stations that have been set out around the room.
 4. Lunchtime will happen in the **classrooms** and children will be served by the usual midday supervisors that they are familiar with. **Packed lunches from home are not permitted** under the new health and safety guidelines. Please let the office know if your child has any new dietary requirements or allergies that we should know about. Each classroom has toilets that the children can access independently, and only children from that pod will be using them throughout the day.
 5. In the afternoon after lunch there will be another short carpet session led by the teacher, and then children will be free flowing again until home time.
 6. At the designated home time staff will lead the children out and will dismiss them from a safe social distance to their parent/carer. (please see 1. for details)



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- **Changes to the provision, resources and social distancing in school:**

Due to the health and safety rules, many items have had to be removed from the EYFS provision. This means that there will be no access to malleable materials such as mud, sand, playdough, foam. There will be no soft toys, dressing up clothes, and a reduced number of books. This is to ensure that the equipment the children will have access to can be washed easily on a daily basis and disinfected to reduce the potential spread of the virus.

During free flow time whilst it is not expected that children and staff within a pod will keep 2 metres apart, we have made careful considerations to the layout of the room in terms of how many children can access an activity at one time. This is in order to reduce contact between children and staff in a sensible way. We are going to try and encourage 2 children at each table activity at any one time, 2 children at the fruit table, 1 child on the computer at a time, on the carpet and when moving around the room children will free flow and play as normal with their friends.

- **Access to the outside area:**

As the two pods of children are **not** permitted to mix, there will be an outside time rota to ensure that children have as much access to the outdoors and open air as possible, in a safe and measured way. We aim to spend as much time as possible outside so please ensure that your child has an appropriate coat and shoes on each day.

- **Changes to our normal teaching approach:**

There will be opportunities for children to take part in more directed activities with an adult or in a small group as time progresses, but initially there will be no formal taught sessions apart from the carpet times. Our main focus is on promoting children's emotional wellbeing, and focusing on encouraging children's communication and language and physical development skills. All learning will be delivered by following the children's interests and responding to their reactions and emotions about returning to school. Unfortunately, there will be no 'show and tell/ news time' due to children not being permitted to bring toys and items in from home.

- **Preparing your child for returning to school:**

To help to prepare your child for their return to school it might be helpful to begin to practice the morning routine a week before school starts. Setting the alarm clock, getting dressed, having breakfast like you will normally be doing is a good way to help your child to prepare themselves for the transition of returning to school. **Not at peak times**, but perhaps during the late morning or afternoon doing the walk/ journey to school would also be helpful to for your child.

- **Reminder about clothing:**

Parents will see that in our risk-assessment we ask parents to wash clothes worn in school as regularly as possible. For this reason, we do not expect children wear school uniform, though we are of course happy if you wish to send them to school in their uniforms.

- **Reminder about Water bottles:**

For health and safety reasons we have removed our drinking fountains. We ask that instead; parents provide water bottles for their children with your child's name clearly visible. They can be re-filled in the playground and in the classrooms.

- **Monitoring your child's health:**

Please take extra care to monitor your child's health before bringing them to school. If they have a temperature, a persistent cough, or loss of taste or smell they **MUST NOT** come to school. If anyone else in your household has these symptoms, your child **MUST NOT** come to school. We ask that if your child or a member of the household has symptoms, you arrange for them to be tested for Covid-19.

Home learning:

It is very important to us as a school that we continue to provide high-quality home learning activities to support children in the Nursery and those children who will not be returning to Reception Class this term.

Nursery:

Laura will continue to send weekly plans on Monday mornings to all Nursery families. As she will be teaching in a Reception Pod throughout the day, I will be available to answer any questions or queries you may have. Please feel free to email me directly on: kparker@gillespie.islington.sch.uk

I know that Laura loves seeing all of the wonderful work the Nursery children do throughout the week, so if you would like to send photos or attachments of children's work please send them to me throughout the day and I will ensure that they are put into a folder whereby Laura can log on and see them at 3pm every day.

At 3pm every day Laura will have time out of class to check her emails and see any work that has been sent that day.

Reception:

Reception home learning activities will continue as normal for those children who are not attending school. I will **not** be sending the home learning activities to parents of children who are attending school. As always please feel free to email me with any questions or queries you may have, and please continue to send photos and attachments of your child's home learning.

I am available for all EYFS parents to email me with any questions or queries you may have, regardless of whether your child is attending school or learning from home. Communication is vital, therefore I will be liaising with the team on a daily basis in order to ensure that our practice is as responsive and reflective as possible.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication in terms of working collaboratively with us to ensure that all children are fully supported during this continued period of uncertainty.

Many thanks

Katy and the EYFS team 😊



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