



South Gosforth First School

'Roots to grow and wings to fly'

Dear Parents, Carers and families of South Gosforth First School,

I am sure that you are well aware of the guidance recently released by the DFE on all children returning to school in September 2020. Below is the link to the updated full guidance (August 2020), but the significant information relevant to our provision is included in this communication from school:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

We are absolutely delighted that we will be able to welcome the children back full-time and meet our new starters on Tuesday 8th September 2020. (Note: This is based on the current DFE guidance and this could change if the R-rate rises locally or nationally. If this does happen an updated communication will be sent out to all families with any changes to arrangements.)

The guidance builds on many of the policies, procedures and routines followed during our partial opening for children of key workers, vulnerable learners and the year groups identified for transition or by the Government.

We are very conscious that although we have been able to get over half of the school population into school, even if just for a few days in the Summer term, there are a large number who have been accessing our home learning alongside family members. We would like to stress that you have all been doing an amazing job keeping the children happy and safe and we have loved using our learning platforms 'Tapestry' and 'Seesaw', which has enabled us to see the children's efforts and give feedback. There have also been our Zoom meetings where the children have been able to see their Teacher, some of their friends and even their new Teacher for September, for those classes that are changing. We would like to reassure you that those first few weeks back at school will involve a range of settling in activities, getting to know the new routines and trying to identify the learning needs that require an initial focus in order to get everyone back on the correct educational track.

Home and School Agreement

It is essential for all parents to work with school to enable us to make these systems work and a vital part of this is the monitoring of COVID-19 symptoms.

If you, your child or any family member who lives with you develops symptoms you must keep your child off school until that person has been tested through the NHS Track and Trace programme and then follow the guidance given.

If a child develops symptoms that could be linked to COVID-19 at school they will be moved to the Parent's Room and parents/carers will be required to collect them immediately and arrange a test.

If a child or a member of staff is tested positive for COVID-19 then we will follow NHS Track and Trace guidance on sending children and staff home to self-isolate if this is required. School and home must be very clear and vigilant with communication, testing and keeping to the guidance rules to keep us all as safe as possible and restrict the transmission of COVID-19.

Uniform

In September all children will be required to wear school uniform. We ask that these can be washed as often as possible. We also ask that children bring a waterproof coat (this is vital for outdoor activities), book bag and water bottle (these will be left in school), which should be cleaned or wiped down each evening, but we do ask that no other items be brought into school such as toys or objects from home please.

Groupings 'Bubbles'

The children will be in class bubbles for the vast majority of their time in school, having breaks, lunch and outside sessions together, but they will be part of an over-arching year group bubble that will allow the children to enter and leave school as a year group and will give the staff flexibility to have short breaks whilst still facilitating playtimes and learning. The guidance stresses that younger children find it more challenging to socially distance and therefore the emphasis is on minimising contact with the whole school as much as possible. Classrooms may look a little different at the start of the year as current guidelines are that all desks are forward facing and the children sit side by side. We will continue to review this in line with changing guidance.

Lunch will be eaten in the classrooms (Only Reception will use the Dining Hall) and arrangements are still to be confirmed regarding menus by our catering service.

Note: Attached to this email is the timetable of start, finish and break times for each year group. It is essential that all children are punctual and arrive at their allocated times to allow this work. From Tuesday 8th September 2020 all children will need to be collected from their class at their allocated time – we can no longer accommodate earlier collection with a sibling who has an earlier finish time. A one-way system is in place where parents go in through the usual gate, drop their child off at the correct classroom and then keep walking to the side gate by the carpark to exit. All children must walk around (no running or bikes/scooters) due to the increased numbers. Playsafe will fit in with all of the staggered start and finish times alongside school.

PE and Shared resources

PE will take place outside, unless the weather is torrential rain, in which case we will deliver sessions in the large hall but do activities which do not entail the pupils getting too out of breath. We ask that children come in to school in dark-coloured, plain jogging bottoms, trainers, P.E t shirt and school sweater on their P.E days which they won't be getting changed out of.

PE days are:

Reception – Friday

Y1 – Tuesday & Friday

Y2 – Monday & Thursday

Y3 – Monday & Thursday

Y4 – Tuesday & Wednesday

Unfortunately, we will not be able to supply spare PE kits.

Behaviour and expectations in school

Some games, routines and other elements of play have needed to be modified slightly at the moment to encourage the children to limit their closeness to others. Obviously personal hygiene measures such as sneezing into elbows and disposing of tissues have needed to be implemented and we will continue to remind our pupils about these measures.

Assemblies

When assemblies take place they will be as year group bubbles. Parent assemblies will resume when guidance allows.

Playsafe

Breakfast club and after school club run by Playsafe will operate using similar bubble groupings (Early Years, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 and Gosforth Central Middle School). These cover a slightly larger age range but will be consistent across the week and will be kept separate during the sessions. Each bubble will have a designated staff member and they will have their activities and snacks as a group.

Family Consultation Evenings

We do hope to be able to deliver 'Reciprocal Family Consultation Evenings' fairly soon into the new academic year. We will share more information about details of how these meetings will work in due course.

Educational Visits & Visitors

Until we receive further guidance there will be no educational visits outside of school (including Forest School) and only very limited visitors into school.

Curriculum Recovery Plans and Catch Up plans

The Senior Leadership Team and Staff have been working on our revised curriculum over the last 18 months but we are now looking at plans on how we can modify this to cater for the needs of our children after a considerable amount of time home learning or in partial opening, with a combination of mixed age and year group provision.

We are developing a curriculum recovery plan which covers whole school strategies and funding decisions, identification of learning needs and year group specific areas of focus.

Year 1 (current Reception) will follow a more Early Years based curriculum for an extended period of time to ensure key skills are developed and activities such as Busy Play and Play Projects can continue. We feel that this is really important for our children.

The RHE (Relationships and Health Education) curriculum was due to be implemented in September 2020, alongside our school focus on the No Outsiders curriculum, which needs to go out to parent consultation. This now needs to be taught by Summer Term 2021 so we aim to carry out our Parent Consultation in the Autumn Term and begin teaching the curriculum by the Spring Term 2021.

Contingency Plans

I feel it is very important to make it clear that although current guidance and plans indicate that all children will be back in school full-time as of Tuesday 8th September 2020 we do need to have in place a clear contingency plan for the possibility of another partial, or national, lockdown.

The causes for this could be:

- 2 or more cases of COVID-19 in school would mean a visit from the local risk team who could advise a partial opening of school for key workers and our vulnerable learners.
- A local outbreak of cases in the area could prompt a return to a partial opening of school for key workers and our vulnerable learners.
- A national rise in coronavirus could prompt a national lockdown meaning a return to a partial opening of school for key workers and our vulnerable learners.

If this was the case we would automatically revert to our Home Learning strategy which would include our Seesaw, Tapestry (EYFS), Zoom and other linked activities. It is our aim at South Gosforth First School to have a focus in the Autumn Term with regards to staff training based on

how these strategies have worked so far, what we could do to improve them and how we could add/adapt activities to ensure progression and effective Teacher/Pupil contact.

Contact with school

Please ensure that if there is anything you would like school to know about before your child(ren) return on Tuesday that you contact school by phone or email. We are in school this week and would be happy to answer any questions or address any concerns you may have.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Whitehouse (and the Senior Leadership Team)

Deputy Headteacher