



1st June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, a huge thank you again to you all for your continued patience and support during the entire time school has been closed to most pupils. Myself and all of Team Dowson are grateful for the engagement and efforts you have put in with your children to continue their education as well as all the lovely messages of support and care you have sent via many different means.

Trustees of the Enquire Learning Trust are satisfied that the Government has met its five tests as indicated by Boris Johnson's speech on Thursday 28th May. They have also signed off my reopening plans and risk assessments which means we can proceed to open. As you know, this opening will be from Monday 8th June to the priority year groups as directed by the government; this will be a phased return over that week as outlined in my last letter and with Year 6 being the final year group to return on Monday 15th June. Specific details to each 'bubble' we have created within the year groups will follow this letter outlining the details pertinent to them. However, the following information is important to share with you all.

Key Worker Group

Our group of children whose parents are critical workers is set to grow considerably from the 8th June as many of you are returning to work. With the numbers we will have, there will be 2 new 'bubbles' formed from these children. One made up of children from years 2 and 3 and another made up of children from years 4 and 5.

These groups are already close to the capacity of 15 children so, going forward, it will become even more vital that if you are a critical worker who is in need of a childcare placement in these groups, you give us 5 working days' notice in order for us to accommodate them. This will be the same period of notice needed if parents of the children from priority groups change their mind after the 8th June and wish for their children to return.

Travel to and from School

We expect that all families are adhering to social distancing measures outside of school and that they do so on their journeys to and from school also, avoiding public transport and walking, scooting or cycling wherever possible. To avoid a lot of traffic around school, we would also ask that you park and stride if coming by car is your only option and that only your family use your car.

Only one person (usually from the same household wherever possible) should drop off and pick up your children. Year 6 can still walk to and from school if this is their usual arrangement but you must insist that they – and trust them to – practise social distancing on the way.

The start and end times of the day will be staggered slightly to reduce the footfall on school grounds at these times, promoting social distancing measures. A one-way system round the buildings will be in place and staff will be on





hand to help direct everyone and ensure the system works for the safety of us all. There will be social distancing markers on these routes and we ask that you are respectful in using these.

When you get to the classroom door that you will be leaving your children, please try not to linger – use the goodbye ritual idea suggested in our parent help guide for preparing your child to return and move along. If your child should become distressed, please move back into a space in the playground with them whilst the rest of the group are dropped off and staff will endeavour to support you at the end when there are less people around. We will endeavour to use every method we can to support your child into school but as too much direct contact should be avoided, it may mean that we ask you to try again the following day.

Hygiene and Health and Safety

Children will continue to have strict hand washing routines in school. They will wash their hands as a minimum when they arrive at school, before and after play and lunchtimes and before they leave as well as after using the toilet. They may also wash before and after any new activities or the use of different equipment.

There will be hand gel sanitiser available in the shared spaces and dining halls as a further protective measure. This is a high percentage alcohol gel in order that it meets the regulations for killing the virus. If you do not wish your child to use this, then please inform school on the first day of arrival.

We recognise that a lot of handwashing – even with gentle ‘school safe’ soap – strips children’s skin of its natural oil which can only be replaced by moisturiser. We have a stock of moisturiser in school which the teacher can squeeze into children’s hands without contact or passing the tube around. If your child has a special cream or handsoap, for example due to eczema, then please let us know and send some into school so that we can support them with this also.

If any child or adult in a group become unwell with symptoms of Covid-19, they will be discreetly isolated and sent home as soon as possible. We will support parents to know how to book a test at this point and would ask that this is carried out at your earliest convenience. All members of the group will be informed that a member of the group is displaying symptoms. The government guidance says that the rest of the group members do not need to isolate unless there is a positive test; however, we acknowledge that parents may choose to keep their children off at this point until the case is confirmed or not. All members of the same household should self-isolate at this point for 14 days or until the test result. A negative test will mean that the child should be able to return to school – unless of course unwell with something other than Covid-19 and needing to stay at home.

We have the facility to take children’s temperatures with a non-contact temperature device to support our decisions and you to understand these. However, symptoms may not always include a temperature; therefore, we know you will all support us if we are precautionary in our decisions to send children home.

We will, of course, still ensure our duty of care to children is completely fulfilled in relation to those who need intimate care and those who need to receive first aid at any point. Staff have the appropriate PPE to wear for these





occasions and will ensure additional hygiene measures for your child at this point too, particularly where distancing is not possible.

School Meals, Snacks and Water Bottles

From 8th June, meal charges will be reinstated for all pupils that are not eligible for a free school meal or universal infant free school meal; this includes for children of critical/key workers. You should have received a letter about this and a survey in order that you register and select your meal options if your child is returning to school dinners. Please notify school if you have not received this.

If your child will be bringing a packed lunch, it is essential that this is named and taken home each day and cleaned thoroughly.

Children in the Key worker groups and Year 6 will be able to bring a snack in for their break time. This should only be a piece of fruit or vegetable, rice cakes, breadsticks or plain crackers with butter and / or cheese. Children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 will be provided with their snacks as usual.

All children will be provided with their own water bottle to drink from which will stay at their work station / in their group area. They will fill this up themselves each day (where possible) to avoid anyone else handling the bottles and they will be sterilised at the end of each week.

Uniform

All children will be expected to wear school uniform from the date of our return. This needs to be a clean uniform each day. It is the summer term so this uniform can include blue checked dresses and grey shorts. We appreciate that children may have grown out of some items and that these may be hard to replace at the moment – particularly shoes!

Therefore, we would ask that you consider replacing items where possible that can still be worn in September if buying the next size up, and that, where this is not possible, you try to put your child in something as close as possible to the uniform item, such as plain black trainers or pumps if school shoes do not fit. Safety is still important so no sandals or open toe shoes please. Please contact us if you would like to discuss uniform and come to a reasoned agreement about replacements.

Curriculum and In-School Learning

Our first priority for all children returning to school will be that they settle and begin to feel happy and secure again at school and understand some of the things that will be different for a while and why. Only once we have given them chance to do this and take part in some activities that familiarise them with new expectations and routines, as well as discussing their experiences of lock down and addressing any worries they have about their return, will they be ready to learn again.





For each of the returning year groups, there will be a different focus on what learning expectations we have and in turn, the curriculum we deliver. For the youngest children, it will be all about re-settling them, revisiting some basic skills and preparing them for starting school 'Reception Ready'.

For Reception and Year 1, we will be re-establishing strong learning behaviours and habits and looking at the essentials of the curriculum that are vital to making the strongest start in the next stage of their learning, particularly in Reading, Writing and Maths.

Year 6 will complete the remainder of the Relationships Education Curriculum that will be important in preparing them for their next stage of development through their teenage years, as well as, of course, the work around transition to High School that will support them to be prepared for this 'leap' to the next stage of learning and education.

Children in all year groups will continue to have a wide and rich curriculum offer that includes such things as p.e. and art with the providers who usually deliver these subjects in school. Sessions where the children are with any other adult than their bubble leader will be subject to particular rules and restrictions that work within our risk assessment to minimise risk. An example of some of these restrictions are:

- ✓ Outdoor sessions wherever possible
- ✓ P.E. with none contact sports and games – and plenty of space
- ✓ Additional adults to go to the bubble where possible rather than lots of groups going to the same person in a different space
- ✓ Separate equipment for different bubbles
- ✓ Equipment sterilised between uses

Home Learning

The home learning offer to all pupils in years 2 – 5 will continue in the same way it has been. The next delivery of learning packs will be towards the end of the week we return ready to start on 15th June. There will be three weeks' worth of learning this time, with a view that, should the children not return at all by the summer, the final learning pack to take us to the end of the summer term will include some support for transition. This may be managed by different teachers to your child's teacher, where the team in school are managing in school group's learning. Teachers will introduce themselves on class dojo so that you know who you will be speaking to and can gain support from. Teachers who are in school will still endeavour to engage with you where they possibly can but please do not expect the regular communication from them that you have been getting during school closure.

For all pupils in the priority year groups who have the choice to return, but do not, the home learning offer will cease, apart from those who cannot return due to clinical vulnerability. You will, however, receive a help sheet of all the things we would like you to continue doing in order that your children keep on top of the vital skills they will need to make a good start to the next year group. We will also be in touch with some support for transition later in the term, and of course the home learning team will still be available for support and advice when you need it, as well as keeping in touch with calls etc. so we are not completely cutting you loose!





DOWSON PRIMARY ACADEMY

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Please continue to stay in touch with school in any way you would like throughout this next phase and we will be sure to let you know how we are all getting on too!

I really hope that in some way we can see you all before we break for the summer but only if the first phase goes well and the second phase can go ahead safely. As usual, I will be in touch about this when I hear anything more.

As always, if you have any questions about this letter or anything else you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to get in touch. You can reach me by emailing admin@dowson.tameside.sch.uk , sending a message through the messenger app on our Facebook Page or sending a message via your class teacher in Dojo where I can directly respond. Finally, you can also phone school; leave a message if no one answers during the holidays and I will return your call as soon as I can.

I am looking forward to seeing you and your smiley faces very soon. Make sure you show me your Dowson hug sign on your way in – I'll definitely be showing mine to you all, feeling happy to have you back and missing those of you that, for now, can't join us.

Take care of yourselves, stay safe and enjoy the sunshine!

Warm regards,

Mrs Kathryn Thornburn
Principal

