



Back to school newsletter

We are counting down to the 8th March and really looking forward to having all our pupils back with us.

We have been asked by the DfE to remind parents that from 8 March, **school attendance** will be mandatory and our usual rules on attendance will apply.

As a reminder, your child should self-isolate and not come to school if they:

- Have coronavirus symptoms or have tested positive
- Live with someone who has symptoms or have tested positive
- Are a close contact of someone who has tested positive.

In line with the latest government guidance, pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable should not attend school. If your child is in this group, they should continue to learn from home until further notice – contact with school at the earliest opportunity will be crucial – thank you.

For pupils who are self-isolating or shielding, we will contact you around how the remote offer will be delivered.

Rest assured that we continue to do everything we can to make sure our pupils can return to school safely. I apologise if the following sounds blunt but the measures we take in school will be less beneficial if we don't extend these beyond school – and as so many of you have worked so hard and sacrificed so much; this doesn't seem the time to 'drop our guard'.

- We will be continuing with timings of the school day as of September which allows for staggered drop off and pick up times to keep groups apart as they arrive and leave – this is only effective if when children are collected you keep them with you and do not facilitate them having close interactions with other children (often from other bubbles). We would also like you to consider wearing face coverings and to be mindful when children are navigating the pavements at these times – thank you.
- Our children are extremely candid and tell us about the playdates and sleepovers they are having with their friends – we never comment to the children and we cannot direct you around this but ask that we all pay close heed to the government restrictions so that we can protect ourselves and everyone else.
- We are aware that as parents you may also wish to catch up with each other but please do not gather at the school gate or near the site.
- Limiting the amount of equipment that children bring to school to essentials like lunch boxes and water bottles helps us to manage resources and avoids unnecessary sharing of items.
- We will continue to group children strictly into year group (or in the case of KS1 – Key stage) bubbles. Who have their own bathroom facilities, hand wash stations, playground and classroom equipment, play and lunch times.
- Handwashing and social distancing (as appropriate) will feature as highly as before and the school operates a strict timetable so that bubbles do not cross.

- We will retain the timetables we introduced in September, which were already designed to give children a concentrated curriculum offer – where we focus on the essentials to support the children being able to move forward successfully.
- To support the feeling of belonging and Team Yarm we ask that uniform be reinstated.
- You will already have been contacted about school meals but if you have any queries please contact the office.

Lockdown has been a challenging period for all of us, and we'd like to thank you for your continuing support during this difficult and uncertain time. If you or your child have any concerns about returning to school, or if you think your child might need extra support when they return, please get in touch with me via the school office. The work you did last time around separation rituals was really effective; so this may be an idea to repeat if you feel your child needs it...

We'd also like to thank you for all your support in helping your child learn from home – we understand the immense challenge this has presented lots of families and are appreciative of your positive partnership.

We'll continue to keep in touch if we update our plans or if we need to make changes due to new government guidance.



And to end on a very positive note – Congratulations to Lizzie who is one of the runners up in an art competition. She entered Cressida Cowell's competition to create a Magical Treehouse, and the winners were announced last week. She has won an original illustration by Cressida Cowell and is waiting excitedly for it to arrive! Your child may have been involved in enrichment activities like this during lockdown – let us know so that we can enjoy sharing them and so that we can offer our congratulations...

I feel There is a lot to be optimistic about for us and our family – at home and school. I keep my fingers firmly crossed that the signposts we have been told about are reached and in the meantime please continue to keep safe and take care.

Mrs Wood