

19th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Term 6 - COVID-19 Update

We hope that our pupils and their families are keeping safe and well.

We are all continuing to face the extraordinary challenges at this time and the situation is affecting all parts of society. Our staff have risen to the challenges created by the COVID 19 crisis and have dealt with extraordinary circumstances with professionalism, resilience and remarkable dedication.

Coronavirus confirmed cases

You will be aware of the positive Coronavirus cases that have now been confirmed within our school setting. We would like to assure you that we are making decisions based on the advice given to us via recognised government guidance and we are receiving regular advice from the Kent Health Protection Team. We continue to make decisions based on the best interests of pupils and staff. We are pleased to share that the member of staff, student and their family members are recovering well.

The main symptoms of coronavirus have been revised to reflect the new symptoms that are occurring. If your child or one of your family members has one of the symptoms below, please inform a member of the leadership team immediately.

- High temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- New, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Half term holidays

We would like to confirm that unfortunately school will not be open to pupils during the half term holidays, due to the maintenance work and safety checks that are taking place throughout the week. This work was due to take place during the Easter holidays, but was postponed due to the lockdown measures in place for our contractors. We understand that this may cause further worry and stress to our families during these uncertain times, but we hope you appreciate our statutory duty to ensure that our school environment is safe and in full working order ready for term 6.

Parent Survey

Thank you to all parents/carers for completing the survey to confirm if you would like your child to return to school on 1st June 2020 if safe to do so. We are currently conducting individual risk assessments to ascertain if school is the most appropriate place for them to be.

We continue to recommend and encourage that those pupils with the most vulnerable medical conditions continue to socially distance for the advised 12-week period. This means that they should remain at home if safe to do so.

We have received a letter today from Matt Dunkley CBE, the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education. He has stated that:

Quite naturally, there are concerns being voiced nationally and locally here in Kent about whether it is safe, or operationally feasible, for schools to begin admitting more pupils from 1st June as the Government has requested. I would stress that the Government has stated that the date to plan for readmitting additional pupils is 1st June, at the earliest. This caveat indicates that the Government will assess nearer this date if it believes the conditions are right to proceed from then, and we do not expect this final confirmation until 28th May, in all probability.

In light of this new information we are planning to open our school on 1st June for our most vulnerable pupils and for those children of critical key workers only. Once we have received further clarification from the government on 28th May 2020 we will be planning to gradually open the school to additional pupils week commencing 8th June 2020 if we able to proceed safely.

Home Learning

Please continue to access our home learning page on our school website so that your child's learning can continue while at home. If you require any additional support or any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school so that you can speak to your child's class teacher or key stage lead.

Free School Meals

If your child is entitled to free school meals, you will have received telephone calls from a member of staff regarding e-vouchers available whilst your child is at home. Further calls will continue to be made to ensure that vouchers are being distributed when required.

Annual Reviews

Annual Reviews have been taking place via the telephone and Skype, these arrangements will continue during term six. Your child's class teacher will contact you directly to make these arrangements. Your Section A must be completed and emailed to office@ifield.kent.sch.uk.

After School Clubs

There will be no after school clubs taking place during term 6 to reduce the risks of the Coronavirus.

Term 6 events

We have made the decision to cancel and postpone all term six school events, such as Sports Day, Achievements Evening and the Prom, due to our Government's guidelines. We know that this is highly disappointing news for our pupils, parents and staff but believe that we must take these necessary measures to reduce large numbers of our school community congregating together in the school at any one time.

Sixth Form

North Kent College continues to be closed and therefore we will continue to make provision in school for those Sixth Form students whose parents are critical key workers from 1st June to 5th June 2020. This will be reviewed in line with the school's arrangements outlined above.

Revised arrangements and procedures that will be implemented on 1st June 2020

Timetable and Class Groupings

Your child will be following their usual timetable, as far as possible, and may be learning within a different classroom environment with a range of peers from other classes within their key stage. In order to limit class sizes, there will be a maximum of five pupils per class. We will continue to ensure that pupils are prepared and supported in the best possible way.

There will be no off-site visits taking place for the next three weeks, this includes our school woodlands. Your child will have the opportunity to participate in hydro therapy pool sessions in school. The class team supporting your child will inform you of the day this will be taking place.

Transport

If your child receives transport via Kent County Council, this will continue for those pupils attending school. If you do not hear from your transport provider to make arrangements for term six, please contact transport's main switchboard on 03000 418484.

Arrival to and departure from school

To reduce crowding at the beginning of the school day:

- Pupils arriving by taxi and mini-bus should arrive at 8.45 am and be escorted to the main reception doors.
- Pupils brought by parents or carers should arrive at 9.15am. We would ask parents not to arrive more than 10 minutes before drop off.
- Pupils from early years foundation stage and key stage 1 (Years R, 1 and 2) who are transported by parents, should go to the main reception area to drop off their child.
- Pupils from key stages 2 and 3 (years 3 to 9) who are transported by parents, should go to the doors next to the car park area used for drop off and pick up.
- Students from key stages 4 and 5 (Years 10, 11 and sixth form) who are transported by parents should go to the entrance at the rear of the building.
- Parents/carers and personnel from KCC transport must adhere to social distancing guidelines displayed around the school and leave the school premises as quickly as possible.
- All adults and pupils entering the school building must use the hand sanitiser provided.
- Except under exceptional circumstances, parents/carers should handover their child or young person at the three entrance doors.

To reduce crowding at the end of the school day:

- Pupils collected by taxi and minibus will leave at 3.30 pm and be escorted to the main reception doors by staff.
- Pupils brought by parents or carers will be collected from school at 3.15 pm. We would ask parents not to arrive more than 10 minutes before collection.
- Pupils from early years foundation stage and key stage 1, who are transported by parents, should go to the main reception area for collection when called.
- Pupils from key stages 2 and 3 (years 3 to 9), who are transported by parents, should go to the doors next to the car park for collection when called.

- Students from key stages 4 and 5 (Years 10, 11 and sixth form), who are transported by parents, will be collected at entrance at the rear of the building when called.
- Parents/carers and personnel from KCC transport must adhere to social distancing guidelines displayed around the school and leave the school premises as quickly as possible.
- All adults and pupils leaving the school building must use the hand sanitiser provided.
- Except under exceptional circumstances, parents/carers should collect their child or young person at the three entrance doors and not enter the school building.

Breaktime and Lunchtime Arrangements

All pupils will have staggered break times and will go outside to their designated playground for breaks and maintain social distancing where possible.

All pupils will be eating their lunch within their classrooms to avoid large crowds within the lunch hall. Food will be ready to collect from the school hall from 12 noon for secondary pupils and at 12.30pm for primary pupils.

Social Distancing throughout the school day

- Pupils will remain at a safe distance from one another when participating in daily exercise such as the early morning workout and the daily mile. During the daily mile, pupils and staff must walk with their timetabled groups and not mix with others.
- Music will be taught in the music room. The use of musical instruments will be restricted to those that can be sanitised between use.
- Swimming lessons will continue in the hydrotherapy pool. Pupils should be kept at a safe distance from one another while changing. Pupils must not share equipment such as hats, goggles, towels and armbands.
- PE lessons will be outside wherever possible. When this is not possible, PE lessons will be conducted in the sports hall. Pupils should be kept at a safe distance from one another while changing.

We continue to follow the Government social distancing guidelines and will be encouraging our pupils to regularly wash their hands and follow the two-metre requirement and helping pupils to understand personal space where possible. Our Speech and Language Team have produced visual supports to aid pupils' understanding during these difficult and different times.

Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Mrs A Birch
Executive Headteacher



Miss M Jones
Head of School

