3rd September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Please find attached the latest information regarding Covid and starting school on Monday 7th September (except Reception who start Monday 14th September). There is a lot to read and I appreciate the time that you are taking to digest all the information.

**Staffing changes**

Over the summer holidays we have had one or two staffing changes.

Mrs Webber is going to be taking sick leave. Miss Price and Mrs Winter will be teaching Year 6. Mrs Donnelly will be teaching Year 5 full time. These arrangements will be consistent until further notice.

We are saying goodbye to Ms Palmer who is seeking out new challenges. Ms Palmer has been a dedicated and highly experienced class based teaching assistant and also our SEND TA. She has supported many children and families and we wish her all the best. Mrs Swann will be taking over the SEND TA role permanently. We will be recruiting for the class based role.

Due to the timing of this information we have had to make some short term decisions. We have been very fortunate that current staff have once again increased their hours to support the school and ensure that all classes and children have enough support as we start this new academic year.

Kind regards,

Ms Kitson

**Returning to School on 7th September**

**FAQs**

We recommend that you read government guidance on returning to school. West Sussex has also produced frequently asked questions regarding returning to school. This will answer questions not specific to Loxwood.

[Gov.uk/backtoschool](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_campaign=DfE+C19&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

[West Sussex Return to School](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-and-information/coronavirus-schools-and-education/)

Please can you also read the school’s risk assessment, which can be found on the website.

**What are the pick-up and drop off arrangements?**

In July, we sent you a letter and map regarding picking up and dropping off your children. This information has stayed the same. Please find these letters on the website.

**We are asking that parents do not drive or park on Badgers Way at all for the safety of families trying to maintain social distance whilst using our additional entrances and exit points**

**How do I communicate with the school?**

Continued communication between parents and the school is a high priority, although it is going to have to change;

* There will always be a member of staff on the field gate and the playground gate every morning as usual. Please feel free to give them messages or letters including changes to pick up/drop off arrangements that you may have
* Call or email the front office. messages@loxwoodschool.com is checked throughout the day
* If you do need to drop something off at the front office please call to let us know that you are going to need to come in
* If you do need to visit the office please wear a face mask and only one person or family group are allowed in at one time

**What bubble will my child be in?**

Bubbles will be kept separate for playtimes and lunch times.

Bubble 1 - Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 (these year groups share a toilet and will have outdoor playtime together. Aside from this they will be kept separate)

Bubble 2 – Year 3 and 4

Bubble 3 – Year 5 and 6

Children will not be able to maintain social distance and therefore high levels of hygiene will be expected of them. We know that at home you have taught them well to live with Covid and we will be reinforcing those expectations within school.

**What about playtimes and lunch times?**

The bubbles will have separate play areas during these times and playtimes will be staggered.

Lunch time for the infants will look very similar since they are in the same bubble. The different classes will sit only with their class and the hall will be cleaned between infant and junior use.

Lunch time for the juniors will start slightly later to accommodate additional cleaning. Packed lunches will eat in their classrooms. Hot meals will eat in the hall with the two bubbles separated. Hot meal numbers in the juniors are generally small enough to accommodate this arrangement.

**What about fruit?**

Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 will need to bring a piece of fruit or vegetable in for snack.

Years Reception, 1 & 2 fruit will be provided from 14th September. For the first week Year 1 and 2 please provide fruit or vegetable from home.

Please ensure that fruit or vegetables only are sent in. This does not include fruit roll ups, crackers, Frubes etc.

**Do we send in PE kits?**

Yes please. PE kits can now be left in school and sent home half-termly (or more often if needed).

**Do you have enough hand washing facilities and hand sanitizer?**

Every classroom has a sink and access to toilet facilities. All the classrooms also have access to hand sanitizer including the hall, staffroom, front office and entrance hall. Staff and children will be asked to wash their hands regularly throughout the day including on arrival and departure.

**What about staff?**

Staff will maintain 1m+ social distancing at all times. Some staff will move around the different bubbles depending on their role. High levels of hygiene including hand sanitizer and hand washing will be maintained. These staff will also try to maintain more social distance from the pupils where they are able.

**How will you ‘catch up’ the children?**

Staff will be balancing well-being and rigorous assessments during the first few weeks. These assessments will be in the form of marking, discussions with pupils, 1:1 assessments and tests. By using a range of assessment strategies we will begin to develop an understanding of where children are and what planning is needed. We will then begin to arrange support for pupils that have gaps in their learning. As you may have heard the government has provided some funds for this, however until we have assessed the pupils how best to use these funds is yet to be determined.

As you can imagine this is going to be a very complex picture; as always, our aim will be to ensure that all pupils’ needs are provided for and that they will be supported and challenged as appropriate.

**What if someone tests positive?**

This is answered in the West Sussex return to school information (linked at the top of this letter). Decisions made if this were to occur will be made in partnership with West Sussex public health team.

**What if there is another lockdown?**

Schools are being asked to prepare home learning provision that can start immediately if we have another local or national lockdown.

This is going to be very challenging for many reasons; in particular a teacher is unable to plan learning unless they know which weeks they are planning for. However, in order to organise an improved home learning package we have started training and setting up Microsoft 365 Teams as a learning platform. As we move forwards with this we will be communicating to parents how this will look.