

Welcome back to school!

We are delighted to be welcoming children from all year groups back to school on Thursday 3rd September.

We know that this first day back may be especially challenging for some children and staff have been planning carefully to support your children as they re-adjust to being back in school. This first week the timetable will be flexible in order to allow for a range of creative activities designed to help your children settle and to allow for them to get to know their new class teacher.

We hope that the information below will help you prepare your children for the return to school. We would also like to remind you to re-read the FAQs that we circulated at the end of the summer term, you can find these on the [school website](#).

The government has also provided information that they think parents may find helpful as they plan for their children's return to school – you can access this information [here](#).

We are aware that there is a lot of information to read prior to your children returning to school and would like to thank you for supporting the school by being aware of and following the guidance that we have prepared.

We are very much looking forward to seeing you and your children and to the new academic year.

If at all possible, we ask that only one person brings your child to and collects your child from school.

Childminders are welcome to bring children to and collect them from school.

The usual Reception gate (the gate nearest to Tesco) will be open for children accessing the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classrooms. Children accessing the other classrooms at the front of the school should come in through the single gate near the hall. Children accessing the other classrooms at the back of the school should come in through the gate at the back of the school, on the field. The double gates at the front and back of the school will be exit points – for some parents this may mean that you have to walk right around the school building before exiting – please do not move contrary to the one way system.

In order to help us comply with the requirements placed on us, we would ask that you drop your child off at their classroom door and then continue around the school site following the one-way system. Please do not remain on the school site but make your way around the school as quickly as you can.

If you have more than one child in school, please drop them off and pick them up as you move around the site. Please drop off and pick up all of your children at the earlier times – even if your other children have a later drop off or pick up time. Childminders should also drop off and pick up all the children for whom they are caring at the earlier pick up and drop off times.

If your child is in Reception, Year 2, Year 4 or Year 6 please arrive at school between **8:45am and 8.55am**. If your child is in Year 1, Year 3 or Year 5, please arrive at school between **9:00am and 9.10am** for drop off. In order to ensure that we reduce the number of adults on site at any one time, please do bring your children on to site at any time during the ten-minute slot.

If you are late i.e. you do not arrive in the designated ten-minute window, your child's class door will be locked. Children arriving late must be taken to the main front door of the school for **9.15am**, please wait outside until there is no-one waiting in the office area.

If your child is reluctant to come into school, please do wait until all the other children have come in, when staff can then give some more time to support your child.

If the staff with your child/children have any concerns, or your child does not settle once they are in school, please be assured that one of the staff from your child's class/year group will call you and let you know.

In order to maintain social distancing staff will not be available to chat on the doors, either at drop off or collection. If you want to pass a message to the adults looking after your child, please either email or call the office and a message will be relayed without delay. Please do not come to the reception hatch other than in an emergency. If there is a need for a conversation to take place between you and your child's class teacher, please contact the office to arrange this.

If your child is in Reception, Year 2, Year 4 or Year 6 please arrive at school between **3:00pm and 3.10pm** for pick up. If your child is in Year 1, Year 3 or Year 5, please arrive at school between **3:15pm and 3.25pm** for pick up.

If you will be late for pick up i.e. outside of the designated ten-minute window, please telephone the school office to let them know. Your child will need to be collected from the main office.

Please respect the drop off and pick-up times and try not to arrive early (or late)! At the end of the day, if necessary, please wait, socially distanced, outside of your child's classroom and your child will be sent out to you. Once your child has come out, please do not wait on the playground, but leave the site as quickly as you can.

There will be a number of additional routines in school in order to reduce the risk of transmission. For your children the most noticeable changes will be the increased requirement to wash their hands, staggered playtimes and lunches taking place in classrooms.

In order to enable us to deliver a rich and broad curriculum and to provide both stretch and additional support, our bubbles will be year groups. Within year groups children will move freely, they will have access to a shared year group area (outside of their classroom) and may be taught by any of the staff working with their year group. Each bubble will have access to their own toilets and sinks.

Children will not mix outside of their year groups and movement around the wider school building will only take place in exceptional circumstances. There will be no whole school gatherings e.g. Collective Worship.

The vast majority of staff are attached to only one year group. On the limited occasions where it is necessary for us to move staff between bubbles, the government guidance is being carefully adhered to.

Unless there is any change to the government guidance, neither staff nor children will be wearing face masks at any time. Children will not be expected to be socially distant from one another.

If your child is unwell, whether or not their symptoms are Covid-19 related, you must contact the office to let them know. To help us keep our school community healthy, please do keep your child at home if they are unwell. Any child who has been sick or had diarrhoea must remain off school for 48 hours after the last episode.

If your child has any of the symptoms of the Coronavirus -

- a high temperature
- a new or continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, their normal sense of taste or smell

they **must not** come into school. In the event of your child showing any of these symptoms they must have a test for Covid-19. You can arrange for them to have a test by following the information that you can find [online](#). Neither your child, nor any of their siblings, must come into school until they have had the result of the test.

If a test result is negative and your child is well, they can return to school. As soon as a negative test result is received, any siblings can return to school.

It would be helpful to us if your child is able to bring a pencil case into school. If at all possible, please make sure that pencil cases are made of a material that can be easily wiped clean.

Pencil cases should contain a writing pencil, some colouring pencils, a rubber, a glue stick and a pencil sharpener. Children further up the school can also have a pen for writing.

If you are unable to provide these items, please do not worry, there will be spare sets in school that will be given to all those who need them.

Children must bring a PE kit into school. Until at least the October half-term break, all PE will take place outside, so please do make sure that your child's PE kit is suitable for all weather conditions.

As always, we ask that you name all of your child's clothing and belongings such as lunchboxes and water bottles, this is particularly important at this time to reduce chances of transmission.

As you may have seen from the media, the government is encouraging all children to walk, scoot or cycle to school. At The Blake we would like to reinforce this message and would strongly encourage children to come to school on foot, or using a bike or a scooter.

The bike sheds will be open for the storage of bikes and scooters, we ask that parents are careful to maintain social distancing when placing bikes in the sheds. As much as possible, please can you adhere to the one way system when taking bikes/scooters to the sheds. For many of you this may mean dropping your child first and then wheeling their scooter/bike round to the shed on the way out and similarly at the end of the day picking up your child first and then collecting their bike/scooter as you leave the site.

Please note that children cycling to school need permission to do so. All children cycling to school must wear a helmet. Please contact the school office for the necessary paperwork.

Over the summer we have been working with Oxford Active regarding wrap around care and you should have received information regarding this. The Oxford Active staff will be supported by members of the school staff team and will be adhering to the school risk assessment as well as their own. The Oxford Active team members have undergone additional training to ensure that they are aware of the current requirements upon them.

Initially we are not planning to have any other before or after school clubs, but we will keep this under review.

Music lessons, taught by external providers, will be resuming this term. The school has a risk assessment in place in relation to the teaching of these lessons, which is in accordance with the government guidance. We are aware that, given the number of children with whom they will be having contact, some of these external providers may wish to wear face masks/visors. We have left this decision up to the individuals concerned.

Later today you will also be receiving some year group specific information – this will provide you with a quick check sheet of information that you need to know before your child returns to school on Thursday morning.

We would like to remind you that there is now an expectation that all children will be in school every day. If your child will not be in school for any reason you must telephone the school office to let them know.

We are looking forward very much to welcoming your children back to school.

Loving, learning and flourishing in community