

Friday 16th July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We find ourselves in rather a strange position on this last school day before removal of restrictions on Monday. We currently have three class bubbles and a Y5/6 breakfast club bubble isolating, 13 other children isolating for Covid related reasons and 18 staff not at school due to a combination of family based isolation, bubble closure or being contacted by the NHS Track and Trace app. Unsurprisingly, this has contributed to a rise in anxiety levels amongst the school community which is increased with restrictions about to ease and the holidays approaching. This of course has had some impact on our plans for the rest of the year.

**Transition**

We have had to re-evaluate elements of the rest of the term. Most notably, we have decided to no longer go ahead with the internal class transition planned for Monday 19th July. We have updated our risk assessment for these events in the light of rising covid infection rates in the local community, and feel that the control measures we are able to put in place are no longer sufficient to reduce the risk of infection or self-isolation to an acceptable level. The safety and well-being of children, families and staff have to be our priority. Despite changes to track and trace coming into effect on Monday 19th July (which I will explain below!), it will be hard to prove that a teacher doing their job well in a class of children has not come into close contact with children in the class, meaning that the teacher would have to isolate where there is a positive case. Thank you for your understanding. Information about what we are doing for transition can be found below.

**Sports days**

We are going to still go ahead with our sports days as planned. They have been planned in a way that ensures there is no additional risk to children and staff. Parents will attend at their own risk. We will guide parents where to sit, how to space out etc, but parents will be responsible for themselves. As per the change of responsibility in Track and Trace from Monday NHS will be responsible for contact tracing rather than school. All information regarding sports days was in last week’s newsletter and repeated at the bottom of this one.

Due to isolation, 5CB sports day will now take place after on the afternoon of Monday 26th July at 2:15pm

**Protective measures**

I would ask that between now and the end of term parents are sensitive to some increased anxiety in the school community and perhaps continue to wear facemasks on the playground and at sports days for the benefit of everyone, despite what I wrote in last week’s newsletter. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

**Contact tracing for Covid-19 from Monday 19th July**

You are probably aware that the Government has said that as part of Step4 on Monday schools are no longer responsible for contact tracing following a positive case of Covid-19 in school. This means we will not be informing you that we are closing bubbles or telling anyone they have to isolate. All contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace. I have many questions about this and no doubt you will too. Some of them are answered in the letter and guidance below which are direct from the DfE to parents which we were issued yesterday. This can all be found at the bottom of this newsletter (**please do read this)**. However, it seems there are still lots of unanswered questions. As you know, I normally like to suggest that you email or call me with such questions, but I have to be totally honest, I do not have the answers. I recommend calling 119 and asking your questions and go from there. There is a frequently asked questions document attached with this newsletter too.

**Finally a thank you**

Closing bubbles is one of the hardest things I have had to do as a headteacher. Partly due to all the things I have to try and get right and the weight of responsibility, but mostly because it means not having children at school for yet more time. As our official responsibility for this finishes, I wanted to say a huge thank you to all the parents who have had this dreaded news over the last week or so for their understanding, prompt action, attitude to remote learning and generous support for the school. I am very grateful. Thank you also to my team here at school who have assisted me in managing all of this while also carrying out all of their other workloads too. Thank you to the staff for covering lots of unavoidable staff absence. Most of all though, thank you to the children for (as usual!) taking all of this in their stride and being positive, happy and engaging so well in remote learning and google meets. A mention too to the children in school for being so flexible and adaptable as different people appear to teach them from time to time! Yet another example of many as we the end the year of how amazing the #LittletownBigteam is.

Yours faithfully,

David Perkins 

Principal

**Transition**

Please find below links to padlets welcoming parents and children to their new year groups in September. These contain videos, photos and lots of information for you to familairise yourselves with over the Summer. Current class teachers will spend some class time going through these padlets with their class, help to answer any questions and reassure the children of any worries. Teachers will all pop to the doorways and outside playground spaces of their new classes a few times between now and the end of the year so the children get to see them in real life! Finally, next week teachers will meet with the teachers who are receiving their classes to pass on key information about the children.

**Padlet links: (Reception have received theirs already)**

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| Welcome to Year 1 | <https://en-gb.padlet.com/LittletownAcademy/66hyflhsif8wjzq5> |
| Welcome to Year 2 | <https://padlet.com/LittletownAcademy/egjm7gb7bi9miscz> |
| Welcome to Year 3 | <https://padlet.com/LittletownAcademy/idvlexciwd4s1av6> |
| Welcome to Year 4 | <https://padlet.com/LittletownAcademy/nii6muoc5upg9bho> |
| Welcome to Year 5 | <https://padlet.com/LittletownAcademy/jzhcvv3hn4yne59k> |
| Welcome to Year 6 | <https://padlet.com/LittletownAcademy/uer2au2teo1piu3e> |

**Sports days: Message from the PE Team**

We are really looking forward to being able to hold sports days again this year and welcoming you to come to watch and cheer on your children! There will be a few changes to previous years events due to Covid restrictions. For example, there will be no carousel of activities on the top playground and no house team events and the children will only compete against the children from their class bubble. The morning sports days will start at 9.15am prompt and the afternoon will start at 2pm prompt. You are welcome to make your way to the top field 15 minutes before they are due to start. Please note we will request that you sit in class bubble groups (there will be cones to show you where to go). Our risk assessment will still not allow parents (or younger children) to use school toilets so please bear this in mind. On your child’s sports day please send your child in in their full P.E. kit (they do not need a change of clothes) and they need to have a named water bottle and sunhat as well as wearing sun cream. We hope you enjoy this first event of the school year and let’s hope for some good sunny weather!

Tuesday 20th July Morning (9.15am-10.15am) Nursery and Reception

Tuesday 20th July Afternoon (2pm-3pm) Year 3 and Year 4 Gates open at 1:45pm

Wednesday 21st Morning (9.15am-10.15am) Year 1 and Year 2

Wednesday 21st Afternoon (2pm-3pm) 5ZU and Year 6 Gates open at 1:45pm

Monday 26th July 2:15pm 5CB

**Mental Wellbeing**

As we fast approach the end of term I would like to thank the Year 6 Mental Wellbeing Ambassadors for their contribution this year. Due to all the restrictions, the ambassadors have been limited in what they have been able to do but they have risen to any challenges they have been set including looking after the school guinea pigs and organising the Lucky Dip Cake Sale.

**Reports**

Teachers have been working hard on reports over the last few weeks. Mrs Hawkins and I, between us, read and comment on every single one. Due to lots of additional workload and situations over the last couple of weeks it is going to take us longer than usual to complete this important task. This may mean reports come home slightly nearer the end of the school year than usual. Thank you for your patience with this.

**Breakfast and After school clubs**

Please note the deadline for this is today…

Registration and booking forms are available for next year. If you are interested in using either club, please follow these links to the relevant forms:

**Registration form:** <https://forms.gle/mHgk9tFoTa7ArdVr9>

**Booking form (Sept-Dec):** <https://forms.gle/TzXmg2KkxVm1TjCw7>

An up to date registration form must be submitted before we can accept your bookings. The deadline for returning booking forms is 16th July.

We will be operating on a week's notice period for refunds on cancellations from September.

**CHANGES TO CONTACT TRACING IN EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE SETTINGS**

**Letter to parents from the Department of Education**

**Letter to parents, carers or guardians**

Dear [parent/carer/guardian]

**Re: Changes to contact tracing in education and childcare settings**

As you know, the Prime Minister announced on 12 July that Step 4 of the roadmap would go ahead on 19 July.

One of the key changes that will take place from 19 July is that education and childcare settings will no longer be asked to conduct routine contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with either the positive case – or in the case of children – the parents, carers or guardian of the positive case to identify close contacts.

NHS Test and Trace already manages the contact tracing process for the rest of society – including children who have recorded a positive PCR test – and has expertise in supporting people to identify close contacts.

This letter sets out in more detail below how that process will work and what you need to do if your child tests positive for COVID-19.

Self-isolating and taking a test

1. If your child has symptoms, they and other members of the household should self-isolate – and you should inform their education or childcare setting. You should immediately order a PCR test for them. If the PCR result is negative, they and other members of their household can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons). If the PCR result is positive, they, other members of their household and any close contacts identified by NHS Track and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the onset of symptoms.
2. If your child has a positive result from a lateral flow device (LFD) test, they and other members of the household should self-isolate – and you should inform their education or childcare setting. You should immediately order a confirmatory PCR test. If the confirmatory test is taken within two days and the result is negative, they and other members of their household can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons). If the confirmatory PCR test is positive (or is taken more than two days after the LFD), other members of their household and any close contacts identified by NHS Track and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the LFD test.
3. PCR tests can be booked online through the [NHS Test & Trace website](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/) or by calling 119.
4. PCR test results will be recorded with NHS Test and Trace automatically, but you should also communicate the result to the education or childcare setting during term time or summer provision.

Contact tracing

1. If your child gets a positive PCR test result, NHS Test and Trace will contact you, using the details you registered when ordering the PCR test. You and/or your child will be asked a series of specific questions designed to identify who your child has been in close contact with. Being in an education or childcare setting with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not necessarily mean a person is identified as a close contact.
2. You will be asked to provide the contact details, if you know them, of any of the individuals – or their parents or guardians – who have been identified as close contacts. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch with these close contacts and provide appropriate instructions or advice (see below).

Self-isolation and/or testing of close contacts

1. At present, anyone identified as a close contact is legally required to self-isolate and must not attend their education or childcare setting (the only exception is if they are participating in a daily contact testing trial). Anyone identified as a non-household close contact by NHS Track and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of their most recent contact with that person. If they live in the same household, they must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of that person developing symptoms (see point 1 above) or, if that person was asymptomatic, the date of their test (see point 2 above). NHS Test and Trace will notify you of the day on which the self-isolation period ends.
2. Close contacts are also advised to take a PCR test. If the test result is negative, they must still complete the full self-isolation period, as the test will not detect all positive cases. If the result is positive, they will need to self-isolate for a further 10 days – and NHS Test and Trace will contact them to identify any close contacts.
3. **From 16 August,** if the close contact is under 18, they will not have to self-isolate (in line with the policy for fully vaccinated adults) but will be asked to take an PCR test immediately, other than for very young children identified as non-household contacts, and they will not need to self-isolate while awaiting the results of the test. If the PCR test is positive, they will be required to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch to identify close contacts (see points 5 and 6 above). Further guidance on these changes to self-isolation will be provided shortly.

We recognise how difficult the past 18 months have been and the sacrifices that all families, education and childcare settings have had to make. This has been an enormously challenging time for everyone and we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for everything you have done.

[Yours]