



11th September 2020

Dear Torbitt Family,

It has now been a week since pupils returned to school and it has been so lovely having them back and learning in our classrooms. We have been very impressed with both their behaviour and how well they have settled in, demonstrating their high level of resilience as they have thrown themselves into the exciting activities taking place across the school.

I want to thank the vast majority of you for respecting each other and following the new systems put into place at the beginning and end of the day. Some of you have fed back that the morning works better than the afternoon and have made some suggestions as to how this could be improved. I feel it is important that you understand that all feedback has been discussed and is valued, and wish to share with you the reasoning behind the decisions we have taken.

Firstly, please, remember that as a 'Rights Respecting School' we are guided by Article 3, which states that 'every decision we make should be in the best interest of our children'.

Our aim at drop off and pick up is to get the parent and carer body in and out of the school site as quickly and safely as possible, minimising potential contact/transmission time for families across the school, and maintaining the amount of learning time children have each day.

Suggestion 1- staggered end times

We feel this would not benefit parents who have more than one child, as staggering end times across different year groups would result in many parents having to wait on the school site or blocking the one-way system and increasing crowding. Staggering end times alphabetically (i.e. by surname) would cause disruption in the classroom and significant loss of learning time, as having pupils leaving at different points would be logistically complex and require significant monitoring by staff, taking them away from their other duties. Staggered times would also lead to increased number of parents/carers having to wait on the site should they arrive slightly earlier or later than intended due to unforeseen circumstances.

Suggestion 2- opening the gates earlier

We feel this would not benefit our children as it would mean many would end up having to stand in the playground longer waiting to be picked up, further reducing their learning time. (Learning time is already being lost within the day due to other covid measures, e.g. by the increase in the amount of time that they are washing their hands). Also, as the weather gets colder and wetter through the Autumn and Winter this would not be ideal.

Suggestion 3- open the gates and let the parents socially distance in the playground

We feel this would be a very dangerous option, as it would effectively counteract the benefits of the current one-way system. Parents and children would be crossing over each other, and there is a high likelihood that parents would start congregating and socialising in the playground for longer periods of time. We continue to believe that keeping everyone moving through and out of the site is the best way to keep our pupils and community safe. We have also made some small changes to our current arrangements (such as opening the main double gates at the exit and providing another exit route for Year 6 pupils and parents) which we hope will keep things flowing more smoothly and with less congestion.



We are very grateful to all of you who greet us cheerfully in the morning and are supporting us in trying to keep our school community safe. However, we are also saddened by the small minority of parents/carers who feel that somehow the rules don't apply to them. Parents have asked me to have staff outside the gates as parents and carers push in and do not queue, socially distance or wear masks. This is not something that we can do, as the staff are employed to teach your children not to enforce basic respectful behaviour amongst the adults. For the sake of our children's wellbeing and safety as well as for each other please can all parents be mindful of their own behaviour with other members of the parent community – please wear a mask (unless exempt) to protect and reassure those around you, try to keep 1m social distance between yourselves and other bubbles (whilst entering as well as whilst queuing), and please stick to the one-way system. We cannot force anyone to do these things, and so we ask you as our school community to each take responsibility individually.

Finally, we have sadly had a very small number of parents who have been disrespectful and rude to members of staff - this will not be tolerated. If any parent /carer deliberately and continuously disregards the one-way system or is rude to any member of staff I will ask to speak to those individuals and a warning letter will be sent. If this continues, for the safety of school community, it may lead to a parent being banned from entering our premises. We have also parents /carers who disregard the safety of our children by parking in front of the school gates. Again, please be respectful to our children and park away from the school.

Please see our 'Parent code of conduct' on our website for further details.

A few reminders:

- Socially distance yourselves from any other parents and carers
- Please wear a mask (unless exempt) to protect the parent/carer community
- Do not bring in bags/ books bags. They children only need a small packed lunch box
- Do not have your children scooter or ride a bike to school (temporary measure)

Thank you for your continued support - I hope your all have a wonderful weekend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paven Kettory'.

Mrs Paven Kettory
Acting Headteacher

