Explore, Learn and Grow Together

Brewery Road
Wooler
Northumberland
NE71 6QF

Friday 26th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to share with you the plans and essential information for welcoming all children back into our schools on Monday 8th March. We are all really looking forward to getting all of the children back into school and into lessons (as I am sure all parents and carers are!). We have been working hard to review the guidance for schools released by the government following the Prime Minister's announcement on 22nd February and to ensure that we have all of the necessary procedures in place to safely welcome all pupils back to school on 8th March. At the time of writing the guidance issued to schools contains a lot of information – I have noted below **the system of controls** that we are being asked to work to from the guidance. It is essential that we have your confidence, support and cooperation as we implement these procedures here at our schools.

System of controls

This is the set of actions schools must take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection'. These are very similar to what was required of schools in the autumn term.

Prevention - You must always:

1) Minimise contact with individuals who are required to self-isolate by ensuring they do not attend the school.
2) Ensure face coverings are used in recommended circumstances.
3) Ensure everyone is advised to clean their hands thoroughly and more often than usual.
4) Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
5) Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.
6) Consider how to minimise contact across the site and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
7) Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.

In specific circumstances:

8) Ensure individuals wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.
9) Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing, where available.

Response to any infection - You must always:

10) Promote and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.
11) Manage and report confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community.
12) Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

We will be operating a staggered start and finish for each school to minimise contact between individuals. Our classes and form groups will again become our bubbles here in school. Children and staff will work within their assigned bubbles during lessons and will have their own play times/play spaces and lunch arrangements to minimise contact between the different bubbles within the school. Any spaces that are shared (this will be necessary for our older children in Glendale Middle to enable specialist teaching to be maintained) will have specific cleaning procedures in place for frequently touched surfaces. It is vital that everyone knows and understands the rules for arriving and departing from school – only by working well together will be able to get everyone in and out again safely. **On the final page of this letter I have outlined how our one-way systems will operate – please, please, please read and then follow these systems from Monday 8th March.**

We will continue to be restricting access to our site in line with the guidance and will only be allowing the parents of our younger children onto the grounds for dropping off and collection of their children. In the mornings only parents of our younger children will be allowed onto the school site (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2). In the afternoons only parents of children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 will be allowed on site but everyone must follow the one-way and distancing plans and wait in the prescribed areas for their children to be handed over from teachers. Staff will be out to help this system establish over the first days as we get back into routine.

PARENTS & CARERS MUST WEAR A FACE COVERING AT ALL TIMES WHEN ON THE SCHOOL SITE AND THEY MUST NOT CONGREGATE AROUND THE ENTRANCE AND EXIT POINTS AT THE FRONT OF SCHOOL ON BREWERY ROAD.

Wooler & Glendale specific routines and procedures

Wooler First School:

- Wooler First School will start between **8.45am and 8.55am** each day – children will not be allowed onto the school site before this time period. Children will follow the one-way system and will be greeted by their teacher at the front of school at their designated entrance before heading straight into school and their bubble classrooms (see plans on p4). Staff will meet children using school transport as they arrive at school.
- Wooler First School will finish between **3.00pm and 3.15pm** each day – children will exit from school by their designated exits and follow the one-way system to leave the school grounds. Children on school transport will remain with their teachers and be guided to their transport once the other children have departed the site. **Please see individual class finish times noted on the pictures on p4 of this letter.**
- Bubble groups will have exclusive use of a classroom and a designated outside space. There will be limited face-to-face interaction between staff and children in different bubbles. We will have routines in place for frequent hand-washing/sanitising and cleaning during the school day in each bubble. First Aid and toilet visits will also be managed by bubble staff.
- Little Acorns Nursery will be operating under the current guidance and parents must follow the drop-off and collection rules that are in place for Wooler First School. Parents will not be allowed into the nursery and will continue to drop-off and collect children from the designated point next to the entrance ramp for the swimming pool. Session times will be confirmed as usual directly from Gillian in the nursery. Before and after school childcare will also be back in operation – please contact Gillian for session bookings.
- Children in Year 3 and Year 4 will be expected to wear a face covering as they arrive and depart from school.

Glendale Middle School:

- Glendale Middle School will start between **8.55am and 9am** each day – children will not be allowed onto the school site before this time. Children will follow the one-way system to their designated points where they will be greeted by their teacher before heading into school at their designated entrance for hand washing and then to their bubble classrooms (see plans on p4).
- Glendale Middle School will finish at **3.15pm** each day – children will exit from school by their designated exits and follow the one-way system to leave the school grounds by the pedestrian exit. Children on school transport will remain with their teachers and be guided to their transport once the other children have departed the site.
- Bubble groups will stay together throughout the day only moving from their designated classroom if they need to access one of our specialist teaching rooms (technology/food technology/computing) and each bubble will have a designated outside play space. Interaction face-to-face between staff and children in different bubbles will be restricted and children and staff will be expected to observe appropriate social distancing. We will have routines in place for frequent hand-washing/sanitising and cleaning during the school day in each bubble. First aid and toilet visits will also be managed by staff.
- All Glendale pupils will be expected to wear a face covering as they arrive and depart from school and also when in communal areas of the school as we did last term.

Routines and procedures across both of our schools:

- Parents and carers must comply with the drop off and collection arrangements in place at school (see page 4). **Parents are expected to arrive at the correct time, to leave the site quickly and not congregate around the entrance and exits to the site.** Contact with school should be made via phone or email to the school office.
- Parental vehicles will not be permitted to come into the school car park to drop off or collect children as this will compromise the safety of our social distancing one-way systems. Children and parents must walk or cycle to school where possible. If cars must be used parents must park well away from the school and observe social distancing rules to walk to the school. All parents are expected to be sensible in where they park showing respect for our neighbours and the residents living around the Brewery Road/The Martins/Weetwood Avenue area. It would be ideal if families could agree where older children will be met outside of school at home time – for example in the car park next to the bowling club or the car park by the garden centre. First School parents will be allowed on site at home time to collect children as a safeguarding measure.
- All children must wash their hands before leaving home to come to school each morning. Enhanced personal hygiene routines will continue for all children with effective hand washing, use of sanitiser and good respiratory hygiene expected at all times.

- Children should wear their school uniform and bring layers suitable for weather conditions so that we can take learning outside whenever possible. We are also required to maintain maximum natural ventilation across the schools so clothing in school needs to respond to this (hopefully with warmer spring weather on the way this will not be an issue for long). Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual.
- Before Monday 8th March teachers and form tutors will email parents with their child's timetable. This will identify days for P.E. and for Forest School at WFS. On these days we will be asking children to come to school in their P.E./Forest Kit to minimise the need for changing during the school day. **There will be no swimming at either school for the three weeks before Easter** – we are looking at being able to get the children swimming again in the summer term.
- The kitchen will be operating as normal to provide a daily hot meal service. We will return to operating a multiple sitting system at lunchtimes to minimise congregation in the hall. Children will eat in their bubble groups and play outside in their bubble groups in designated play areas.
- Children must not bring toys or unnecessary equipment from home – at Wooler First School water bottles will be kept in school and washed daily. At Glendale Middle children will be expected to take responsibility for their water bottles and stationery bringing them into school and taking them home again each day. Water will be available to children throughout the day.
- All staff will wear face coverings in communal areas of the schools and is situations were social distancing between adults cannot be achieved.
- Any symptoms of coronavirus at home must be notified to the school and your child must not attend.
- Any symptoms that arise during the school day will lead to a child being isolated and a parent collecting them from site as soon as possible. Isolation will be outside if at all possible supervised by a member of staff. If isolation has to be inside school staff must wear PPE as described in Public Health England documentation.
- All staff and parents are expected to be ready and willing to engage in the national test and trace process and to follow self-isolation rules if someone tests positive for coronavirus. School staff, children and parents will be expected to follow instructions from the local Director of Public Health in the case of confirmed cases or a local outbreak of the virus.
- Testing of all school staff will continue twice a week – this will move from being undertaken here in school to our staff using home test kits from the week commencing Monday 8th March.
- **Children from Year 3 upwards will need a suitable individual sealable plastic bag to keep their face covering in between use – a sealable sandwich bag is ideal for this, we will have spare masks and bags in school which will be given to children as needed.**

School Transport – the County Council transport providers are organising for 8th March as we will be returning to the arrangements that were in place last term. Staff will meet children arriving on school transport and ensure that they are safely on the correct transport home again. As usual any changes to school transport must be reported to the school office.

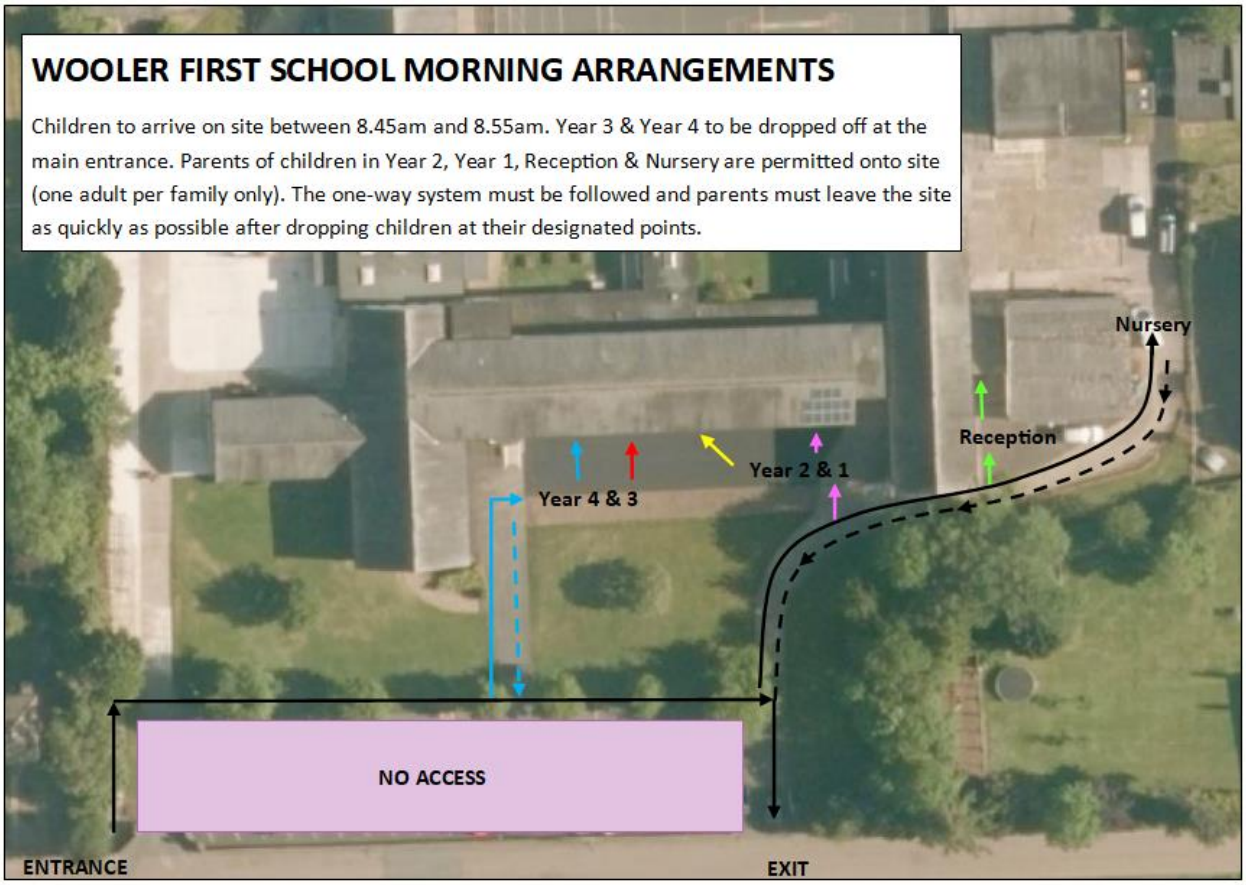
I would like to thank you again for your continued support, understanding, patience and cooperation during these challenging times. I appreciate there is again a lot of information in this letter and in the attached guidance document but we need to ensure that everyone clearly understands how we will be operating to ensure that children and staff are safe and happy. We are all really looking forward to welcoming all of the children back into school after this second period of school closure – it has not been the same without them! A key task for all of us as parents over the next week as we approach 8th March is to make sure that our children are well prepared for getting back into school routines & habits ready for their return to the classroom. I would ask all parents and carers to ensure that positive family routines are now back in place as per my message earlier this week, particularly bed times and morning routines.

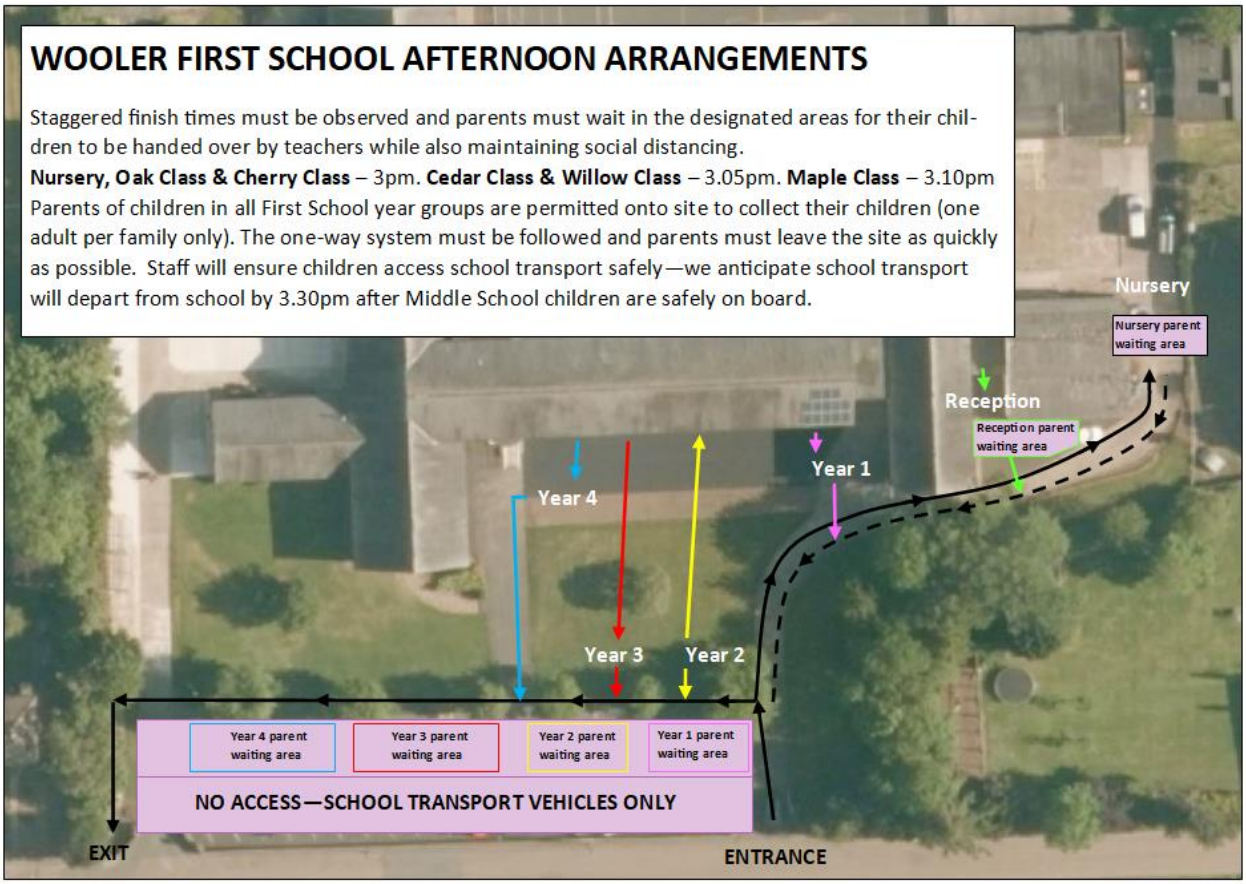
Thank you & keep safe

M.Deane-Hall

Executive Headteacher

Drop off and collection arrangements – Wooler First School





Mr Pearse, Mr Lowrey and I will oversee these arrangements.