**Essendon C of E (VC) Primary School**

*Encouraging everyone’s light to shine (Matthew 5:16)*

**Return to School Procedures – February 2021**

This document is designed to provide the essential details of Essendon School’s Covid-secure procedures for return-to-school in Spring term 2021. For additional information, please refer to the full risk assessment document, available on the website.

This plan has been drawn up by the Senior Leadership Team drawing on guidance from the DfE, Teaching Unions, Herts for Learning, Primary Head’s Forum and Herts County Council.

**Main changes to this document and corresponding Risk Assessment**

* All staff moving around communal areas to wear masks. Staff should only remove masks when in their own bubble or seated to eat lunch in the staffroom.
* All staff to use lateral flow tests the night before coming into school. This is to be repeated after three days of working for full time employees.
* Staff to wear masks at pick up and drop-off times.
* Guidance on self-isolation / bubble-isolation updated to reflect current government guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>)
* We are investigating if lockers can be re-located to allow Homewood to keep bags and coats near their classroom instead of using lockers in the corridor, to reduce unnecessary mixing of bubbles.
* In the first instance, parents should be engaged via phone calls rather than face to face meetings. If this is not possible, face to face meetings should be held outside with masks worn, and only as a last resort should parent meetings take place inside the school building.

**Attendance**

All pupils and staff are expected to attend to school as normal, adhering to the government’s COVID guidance rules as of the 8th March. Up to date COVID guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

**Timetable**

Pupils return: Monday 8th March

We will be fully open on all weekdays according to the normal (pre-covid) school hours. We will operate a “soft start” from 8.40am til 8.50am, and registers will close at 9.00am. Pupils arriving between 9.00am and 9.20am will be marked “late”. After 9.20am, pupils will be marked as “unauthorised absent”, unless arrangements have been agreed with the office in advance.

**Bubble groups**

In line with government guidance, we will continue to implement self-contained bubble groups with contact between each kept to a minimum. Each class will be classed as their own bubble and taught in their own classrooms. To allow for adequate adult supervision, rotas for splitting the use of outside spaces will be in place to enable social distancing. Being outside is deemed an appropriate measure for lowering the risk of infection, therefore outside spaces will be used as much as possible.

**Collective worship**

Classes will not come together for collective worship in the hall. Instead, classes will remain in their classrooms for collective worship, which will be either carried out by the class teacher, “broadcast” to the school via MS Teams, or pre-recorded.

**School trips, visits and extra-curricular clubs**

In order to minimise mixing of bubble groups, there will be no school trips for the foreseeable future. Music lessons and after-school clubs will be able to continue as normal.

**Catering**

HCL will provide a full range of hot and cold meals at lunchtime. Menus will run on a three-week rotation. Pupils will be able to choose between Red (meat/fish), Green (vegetarian), Yellow (packed lunch) or jacket potato options each day. Meals for the week need to be chosen in advance and given to the school office. Staff can order a school meal if they wish. Menus are available on the HCL website.

**Breakfast club and after-school club**

Breakfast club and after-school club, will continue to be run by Multi-Active courses as normal. As a separate entity, Multi-Active have their own risk-assessment and Covid secure processes in place for these times.

**Equipment, school bags, uniform, PE kit, etc.**

Your child should bring a water bottle and book bag, but all writing equipment will be provided by the school. Children are encouraged not to bring pencil cases or additional unnecessary pieces of equipment in to school, as the movement of these objects to and from home could present an avoidable source of infection transmission.

Pupils will be assigned a locker to keep their possessions in.

**Drop off and pick-up**

Since we operate a “soft start” whereby pupils can enter school at any time between 8.40am and 8.50am, there is no need for a staggered start to the day. Parents and children should enter the school through the pedestrian gate. Pantherswood and Homewood pupils can be taken directly to their respective entrances. Warrenwood and Harefield pupils should enter through the main entrance, put their possessions into their locker, then go to their classrooms. Parents should leave the school through the vehicle gates.

At the end of the day, a staggered finish will be in place between 3.05pm and 3.15pm. Parents waiting to collect should maintain 2m distancing in the carpark area. Parents will be encouraged to wear masks when picking up and dropping off, and staff waiting outside should also wear a mask.

**Lunch and break**

Pantherswood and Homewood will eat in the hall from 11.45 to 12.15pm, then return to classrooms for until 12.30pm. The hall will be disinfected between 12.15pm and 12.30pm. Warrenwood and Harefield will play on the playground from 12pm until 12.30pm. They will then eat in the hall from 12.30pm, after which they will return to class. Pantherswood and Homewood will then go outdoors to play from 12.30pm until 1.00pm. The hall will be disinfected after the second sitting to allow the hall to be used for afternoon lessons.

**Curriculum**

Our immediate aim before the Easter break is to ensure pupils wellbeing is of highest profile and that pupils are supported in re-adjusting to school life. We recognise that the need for additional hygiene and outdoor time will continue to impact on the provision of certain subjects, but we will continue to move as far as possible towards teaching all curriculum subjects fully as soon as possible.

**Cleaning**

* Each classroom will be disinfected regularly through the day.
* Ipads, laptops, etc will be used by only one class per day and wiped down at the end of each day.
* Classes will have a set of playground equipment that will not be shared between other classes.
* No playground apparatus will be available at break times due to the risk of cross contamination.
* Enhanced daily cleaning procedures will be put in place in agreement with our cleaning company.
* Hand sanitizer will be placed in key locations throughout the school building.
* The school will be deep-cleaned before children return.

**Distancing**

* When moving around school, all children will be supervised by an adult.
* To minimize the need to touch handles and queue, doors will be propped open throughout school (except for fire door and security doors).
* As far as possible, desks will be spaced out and children to remain at desks as much as possible. Desks will be arranged to minimize the number of children facing each other.
* Pupils will have one seat assigned to them in the classroom, and will not move between table groups for different activities throughout the day.

**Toilets**

Pupils will use only the toilets assigned to their class or Key Stage. These will be cleaned at regular intervals through the day.

**Staffing ratios**

* All classes will have at least 2 adults present at all times as far as possible given current staffing levels.

**Cases of Covid in School**

* PPE will be worn by staff if attending to a child who shows symptoms of Covid-19 while in school.
* Thermometers will be in every class to check temperatures of any children displaying symptoms. This will be carried out by a member of the year group team wearing appropriate PPE.
* In the event that a child develops symptoms, they will be supervised in isolation by a member of staff until collected by a parent.
* Parents of pupils in the class thought to be at risk of infection will be informed immediately and may need to self-isolate according to government guidelines.

**Non-Covid-related first aid & safeguarding**

Members of staff trained in first aid will administer any non-Covid-related First Aid in accordance with normal school procedures, while taking all possible precautions against unnecessary contact.

**School Office/administration**

Parents or visitors should not enter the school office for any reason, and should contact the office by phone or email, even if they are on the school site. If it is necessary to speak directly to office staff, parents and visitors should remain outside the office door. Office furniture will be rearranged to maximise distance between office staff and others. No pupils should enter the office and under no circumstances will the office be used as a breakout space for pupils. A screen will be erected at the office desk to further reduce the risk of contamination. Parents asked to come into school for any reason (e.g. to collect a sick child) will be asked to wait outside the main entrance and not enter the building.

**Staffing**

Pantherswood: Mrs Tracy O’Connor (class teacher, full time); Miss Robyn Gurney (teaching assistant, full time); Miss Katie Holding (teaching assistant, 5 mornings + Weds afternoons); Mrs Yvonne Bines (teaching assistant, Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri afternoons)

Homewood: Mrs Vickie Jones (class teacher, Mon – Weds, Thu and Fri mornings); Mrs Ruth Boswell (teaching assistant, Mon – Thurs); Mrs Emma Richmond (5 mornings + Thurs and Fri afternoons); Mrs Fran Hursey (Teaching assistant, Fri afternoons)

Warrenwood: Mr Andrew Woodhouse (class teacher, Mon – Weds); Ms Belinda Canham (class teacher, Thurs & Fri); Mrs Kellie Morton (teaching assistant, full time)

Harefield: Mrs Claire Pulham (class teacher, Mon, Tue & Fri); Mrs Molly Foster (class teacher, Weds, Thu, Fri); Mrs Terri Jenner (teaching assistant, full time)

PE leader: Mrs Janet Pinfold

School Office: Mrs Tina Wilkinson

**Final thoughts**

Clearly we continue to live in very uncertain times, and no-one can tell how the next few months will unfold. I would like to reassure all staff and families that every effort has been made to ensure the safety of everyone within our community. We take our responsibility to ensure safety very seriously, and thank you all in advance for your willingness to work with us during this ongoing challenging period.

**With kind regards,**

**Mr Potter**