



Ditton Primary School

Liverpool Road, Widnes, Halton WA8 7HD



Part of Warrington Primary Academy Trust | Together We Forge Our Tomorrows

Dear Parents/Carers,

I wanted to share with you the arrangements for September before we break for summer so apologies for the length of this letter but I thought a quick reminder around some key points might help.

I'm sure you are aware that current Government advice indicates that the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of all children returning to school, and that for the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus. However, in line with the guidance from the Government, several of the changes we have seen over the last few months, will remain in place to continue to reduce the risk of the spread of coronavirus.

To reduce class 'bubbles' mixing, we will continue to operate staggered start and end times, and children will access and leave school in a carefully planned way via different entrances and exit points. This information will be shared in a separate letter. We do appreciate that staggered start and end times create some challenges for parents and carers, but we also know that you would want us to be doing all we can to keep children as safe as possible in line with published guidance. We will keep this under review but expect it to remain this way for a significant period of time.

From September, we will be operating in larger 'bubbles' which will be a class. This means that your child will be taught with their peers, by their teachers, in their allocated classrooms. Staff can work across bubbles and children can work in large or small groups with a staff member, within their larger 'bubble'. Children in the same bubble will have the same start and end times, the same break times, and the same lunchtimes.

Specific points about your child's return to school:

- Children are to return in full school uniform, with school shoes, in line with our school's published policy which can be found on our website.
- Children are required to bring to school a full PE kit and this should be kept in a small bag. This will stay in school all week to reduce items coming and going to homes and then go home to be washed each term.
- All items of clothing, including PE kits, should be labelled clearly with your child's name.
- Children in years 1 to 6 should bring in a named water bottle each day. This should be washed every night before being brought back to school. Water will be provided for all children in Reception so no water bottles should be brought in for these classes.
- For those children who bring a packed lunch, this can be brought to school in a lunch bag/ lunch box with your child's name clearly written onto it and returned home each night for full washing.
- Children do not need a school bag. All items for use in school will be provided on their desks. WE are currently looking at online book clubs for all children to access and will let you know when this is organised.
- Our school looks a little different at the moment:
 - Children will be seated in rows facing the teacher at the front.
 - Children will be working in their usual exercise books and can share some school resources.
 - There are more hand sanitisers in and around classrooms, and new water troughs for handwashing on the playground.
 - There are signs to remind us all of the rules and to socially distance.
 - The toilets will have additional cleaning measures in place and each class bubble will have a designated toilet to use every day.
- This is a new way of working and we are trying hard to make it as easy as possible. If you need to talk to your child's teacher, please let the office know, preferably by email or telephone and they will be in touch as soon as they can.
- Please make sure your child is on time each day. If they are late we may have to send them home to wait until it is safe to allow them into school.
- Help your child to engage in our remote learning offer if they are unable to be in school.



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Teaching and learning during the autumn term:

We are going to modify our curriculum to ensure sufficient time is given to our core subjects, so that teaching time can be prioritised to address gaps in pupil knowledge and skills following the period of lockdown. Our full curriculum will be implemented over the course of the year, but in September, we will be focusing on English, Maths, PSHE and PE. We will also be covering some of our Science units.

We have identified additional staff and tutors to support children's learning and these staff will be working closely with class teachers to support children throughout their class 'bubble'.

While it may look a little different, we will continue to provide our blended education offer for the very small number of children who are unable to return, should they be shielding or self-isolating. This will be further refined and more details will be provided. In the meantime please find attached the Ditton Digital Home School agreement.

Local lockdowns:

If there is a local risk in the numbers affected by coronavirus, then a local lockdown may be implemented. In school, we would be guided on this by the Local Authority, following their procedures as outlined in the Halton Borough Council COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan. We have plans in place in the event of a local lockdown and would communicate these as necessary. This is when our online live streaming of lessons would take place.

Attendance at school:

Now that the circumstances have changed, it is vital for **all** children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. **School attendance is now mandatory.**

If you have concerns about your child returning, and believe that this may be a barrier to them coming back to school, please let us know. We hope to work with you to understand your worries so that you can ensure you meet the mandatory expectations.

Travel:

To support social distancing and encourage walking. If using a car is unavoidable please be considerate of our neighbours when parking during drop off and collection times.

I know all the teaching staff are as excited as I am about all the children now returning. Whilst classrooms and the building may look a little different, and there are some new routines in place, it is still the same great place where children can enjoy learning, meet friends and succeed.

Thank you in advance for taking time to read this letter and all of the information attached to it and as always for your support.

Have a lovely summer break, stay safe and take care.

Best wishes

Mr C. Jones
Executive Headteacher