


Headteacher
Mrs Sophie Gosden



National Support School
designated by

National College for
Teaching & Leadership

Thursday 4th March 2021

Return to School FAQs

Dear Mums, Dads and Carers,

Miss Plant and I have looked through your responses to our questionnaire about the return to school for all and we have put together the following letter in response to some of your most frequently asked questions. We had 186 responses out of approximately 250 families, which is a good response rate and helps us to know we are hearing our parent and carer voices. Thank you if you responded to us.

Mental and physical wellbeing

We have specially prepared lockdown-return sessions over two weeks all about mental health and wellbeing. These are designed to support the alleviation of anxieties, re-establish routines and relationships and to build up self confidence. Mental and physical wellbeing is as much our priority as the rest of the curriculum. Staff are fully prepared and trained to understand how to build routines and stability again in a safe and caring environment for all of our children. This will be ongoing as we know this is not about a 'quick fix'. Much of this work is what we already do as a school but we have taken into account the new challenges that a prolonged time away from friends and school may have brought to your children.

Learning and 'catch-up' anxieties

We know some children feel worried that they have forgotten some of their learning or that they worry they have not done enough during lockdown. Please let your child know not to worry, all we want is to have them back with us. Everyone has done the best they can in very difficult circumstances. We can catch up on the learning in their time, with ways that work for them. Our school will not be pressuring, rushing or overloading any of our pupils. We know them well; our teachers and teaching assistants are excellent at what they do and we know our Mill way of teaching will support the children to get to where they need to be. Many, many of our children have excelled at the work set for them during lockdown and we will no doubt be rushing to keep up with them!

Keeping in touch with you

Your feedback to our staff has been incredible during lockdown and something many of you do not want to lose is the phone calls and connection with teachers and teaching assistants. We feel the same. We will make sure we keep our support email addresses manned, and we will also ensure you get to speak to your teachers and teaching assistants regularly. We will have a virtual parents evening at some point after Easter, but I am sure you will understand that the teaching teams want to give all of their time and attention to being in class at first. So please bear with them if you think they have 'gone quiet' for the first 2-3 weeks, but I have said to them their 'only' job is to focus on the children returning and settling.

Headteacher

The Mill Primary Academy, Ifield Drive, Ifield, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 0EL.
Tel: 01293 571893 E-Mail: office@themill-tkat.org Website: www.themill-tkat.org Twitter@ @TheMillPrimary



Covid Precautions

Staff testing

Staff in school are already being supplied with LFD test kits to self swab and test themselves twice a week at home. They must report their result to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is completed either online or by telephone as per the instructions in the home test kit. They should also share their result, whether void, positive or negative, with the school to help with contact tracing. Depending upon the result, staff will follow the protocol as set out by the government guidelines.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety remains as high on the agenda as before. We have full trust-wide risk assessments in place and all of the precautionary measures we were taking before Christmas remain. Such as: staggered breaks and lunches, year groups being taught separately, no crossing of year groups in corridors (we use walkie talkies, so only one year group at a time ever moves around the school), four separate staffrooms, adults wearing face coverings as required, plus frequent supervised handwashing and hand sanitising as just a few examples. We also continue to employ an additional cleaner within the school day who cleans frequently touched surfaces such as doors and door handles, walls and railings throughout the day.

Drop off and Collections

School gates open at 8.30, follow your usual routes to drop off and collect please. The school day ends at 2.50 for EYFS and 3.00pm for the rest of the school. We would advise you arriving from 2.50-3.00pm so that there is a ten minute window for collection to avoid congestion, which occurs mainly at the back gate in the afternoons. Please do not rush to arrive at 2.50pm on the back gate, the window is there for staggering your arrivals. Arriving at 3.00pm is absolutely fine! If you do arrive before the back gates open, which we strongly encourage you not to do, please socially distance and wear masks. This protocol remains the same as before Christmas to ensure children get a full day's learning and so that we ensure all families have manageable collections for all of their children. If you can leave the car at home, or are able to park further away and walk, you would also be helping to keep the roads outside our school safer.

Symptoms and positive cases of Covid-19

We continue to follow our procedures as before and the office will continue to contact parents and carers of pupils who show symptoms and ensure guidance is followed by all. We will also let parents know if we have positive confirmed cases, and if we need to close classes or year groups. If that happens, remote learning will start immediately. Pupils self isolating in individual cases will have remote learning provided.

Safety on site

Masks to be worn by all adults on site please and socially distanced movement on the site. Please continue to contact the office via email or phone call. For now, we are following the same safety procedures that you and the children are all familiar with, so the school site will look and feel the same and Covid secure.

Contacting us:

office@themill-tkat.org or 01293 571893 for all general enquiries

attendance@themill-tkat.org or 01293 571893 for all absence reporting and attendance queries

deputy@themill-tkat.org or head@themill-tkat.org on 01293 571893 if you would like to speak Miss Plant or myself

We will be in touch tomorrow with our world book day highlights and other good news about the learning this week.

Kind regards,



Sophie Gosden
Headteacher