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Together, we nurture the future

Dear Families,

The staff at Greenmount would like to wish you and your families a very Happy New Year - one that brings good health and many happy moments that you can all treasure.

You may have seen the Secretary of State for Education address Parliament regarding the arrangements for the return of schools for the start of the spring term 2021. As you will see from the news today, the current position is for primary schools to remain open tomorrow.

We can share with you the following information regarding which classes we are able to welcome back tomorrow. This decision has been made as quickly as we have been able to assess operational contexts and staffing availability, given the short time frame. Further information will be shared regarding the opening of other classes as soon as it becomes available and following further review tomorrow.

We apologise for the inconvenience caused by these changes. As you may be aware, there have been ongoing discussions for schools to take into consideration. We are now in a more secure position to share with you our current situation at Greenmount:

Reopening of Greenmount Primary School: January 4th 2021

Having carefully reviewed operational contexts and staff availability, the following classes **will remain open** tomorrow:

Year 2 Le Brun (Mrs Dubbins)

Year 3 Waterhouse (Mr Padley)

Year 3 Morris (Mrs Slesenger)

Year 5 Hockney (Mr Evans)

Year 6 Doig (Mr Alabie)

The following classes **will not be open** tomorrow, but we will provide you with updates during the course of the day regarding provision for the remainder of the week:

EYFS – both classes

Year 1 – both classes

Year 2 Constable (Miss Mitchell)

Year 4 Chagall (Miss Goodman)

Year 4 Morisot (Mrs Rana)

Year 5 Ayres (Mr Hough)

Year 6 Whiteread (Miss Joyce)

We regret that due to short notice, Google Classroom will not be operational tomorrow. This is whilst we make any necessary updates to this provision.

Robust risk assessments that are already in place will remain, however we would like to gently remind you that **it is the continued adherence to these measures by all of our community that will ensure that we minimise the risks going forward in order to keep our children and families safe.**

With this in mind, I would like to remind you all how we are keeping our Greenmount community safe at school whilst following the guidance from the government and Public Health England. Hopefully, this will reassure you and allow you to prepare your children to return to school.

Asking Staff and Pupils Not To Attend If They Are Unwell

If your child or anyone in your household has symptoms of Covid 19, please do not attend school and ensure you engage in the supportive test and trace process. This applies to staff too. Children and staff will be asked to follow the self-isolation rules and any advice given by the local health protection team. It is really important that pupils **DO NOT** come into school if the following circumstances apply; they present symptoms, have tested positive in the last 10 days, somebody in their household has symptoms, somebody in their household tests positive for COVID-19 or your child has been identified as a close contact of someone with a positive test result. In all of these circumstances, the required self-isolation period should be observed, tests undertaken where applicable and school should be informed immediately.

Attendance

If your child is absent, you must inform the school office as soon as possible with the reason for absence. Absence can also be reported using the Parentapp – click on 'More' and follow the link: Absence reporting. You can also email us: contactus@greenmount.iow.sch.uk

Ensuring Good Hand Hygiene

Handwashing is scheduled regularly throughout the school day. The 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' approach is being used in school. Bins are available in every classroom.

Increased Cleaning

We have increased and revised our cleaning routines that are in place for frequently touched surfaces.

Minimising Contact and Maintaining Distance

School will continue to be operating in whole-class bubbles. Staff in these bubbles will be kept the same as far as possible and lunchtimes are staggered to minimise contact between pupils.

Staggered start and finish times

Bubbles have identified entrance/exits, as well as staggered start/collection times, playtimes, lunchtimes and end times. Times for Monday 4th January have not changed, but we will be reviewing these times this week when our new gates are in place and ready for use. **It is important** that children and families do not arrive any earlier or later than the allocated time. This has worked well so far, as we ensure that as few adults are passing each other as possible, both in the school grounds and on the paths leading into school. Please do not arrive early as this means that we have more adults lining up/waiting than needed when we really need the space for the children to enter safely and at a distance. You should arrive **at** the allocated time for your class bubble (the same as before Christmas). When waiting at the gate, please maintain your own social distance from others at all times. If your child is late, please wait to be informed when and where to line up as this is important in keeping bubbles separate. On the days when it rains at the end of the day, we will adapt and call classes out using our school radios. On these days, it is particularly important to be on time for collection so we can ensure a safe and swift exit from the school site with as few people crossing paths as possible. Again, we ask that only one parent per family at collection and please do check messages if the end of day arrangements change due to the weather.

EYFS - Morning drop off/ collection

Due to the government guidelines and increasing need to socially distance, the EYFS team are going to reintroduce the *coned* area for drop-offs - this is to promote social distancing. Please say goodbye to your child in the *coned* area and then swiftly follow the one-way system to exit the school site. A member of the EYFS team will be outside the classroom to greet your child. When collecting your child, please queue in the *coned* area and your child will be dismissed to you. Messages for staff need to be given first to the school office on (01983) 562165 or email: contactus@greenmount.iow.sch.uk. All messages will be shared with the relevant staff members - this is to limit contact, to encourage a swift and robust system and to keep us all safe.

The use of face coverings in schools

We politely encourage all those who are able to do so, to wear a face covering at drop off and collection times.

Sharing messages with teachers/staff

Please can we remind you that any messages to class teachers must be given through the school office. You can do this by phoning or emailing and using the schoolapp. Staff will endeavour to respond as soon as possible. Staff who are supporting drop off and collection, need to be on hand to organise the swift arrival and departure of all children.

Communicating with the local health protection team

If there are any confirmed cases in school, we will communicate with the relevant bodies to ensure we are taking all the right actions and steps to minimise risk and keep children and staff as safe as possible.

Routines of the day and classroom design/layout

We have already spent time redesigning the layout of classrooms to support teaching and learning in line with health and safety guidelines.

We do not hold whole school assemblies or larger celebrations in the hall, but we do have virtual whole school assemblies during which children and staff share work, stories, news and achievements. This has more recently included children from different classes reporting a weekly news bulletin from their own classroom – this has been truly wonderful.

We will continue to provide our pastoral and personal, social programmes for pupils within bubbles.

Always keeping occupied spaces well ventilated

In cooler weather, our windows still need to be opened - just enough to provide constant background ventilation at all times. Please remember that additional layers of uniform are sensible at this time of year in order to keep children warm whilst they are learning. Children should continue to wear PE kit on PE days to avoid the necessity for changing in school.

School Meals

Hot meals will commence the week beginning: 4th January.

Please ensure that for those pupils who are required to pay for meals payment is made in advance via Parent Pay.

If your children are in Key Stage 2, please bring a healthy snack or fruit to eat at break time. Free fruit will be provided for Pre School, Reception and Key Stage 1 children.

Stationery and day to day

Stationery will be provided by the school. Children only need to bring their packed lunch (if having packed lunch), appropriate items for the weather, and a bottle of water (all named please). Please **do not allow** your child to bring anything other than items that are absolutely necessary to school to reduce risks.

Important Dates & Information and Parentapp

We will endeavour to ensure all important dates are on the Parentapp and released through our newsletter. Parentapp is our main form of communication with you. If you haven't already signed up, please do so to ensure you receive important messages and information from and about the school. To sign up to the Parentapp, please complete the online form in the link below:

<https://forms.gle/5hrheEVuLfERRce8A>

Free School Meals and other support that can be offered

With the ongoing changes recently, I am aware that families may have been impacted financially over this period and with the move to tier 4. January is already one of the toughest months of the year and one that can be supported by the government if you meet the criteria for free school meals.

This not only means you do not have to pay for your child's meals it also means that the school receives additional funding. There is an online form to complete and we are very happy to support with this form filling if required:

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/iwforms/form.aspx?k=freesm>

If you do not meet the criteria of free school meals but are struggling to get food together for the children's lunches, then **Waste Not Want Not** provides free daily packed lunches for the children.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming all our children back, whilst continuing to put in the correct measures to keep everyone safe so we can enjoy school life to the full. Please be reassured that we are working hard to maintain a safe school environment and I am aware that the changes will bring further challenges for families in the coming weeks. We have the wellbeing of the children and community central to our recent decisions and I know the staff would like to thank you for your continued support and flexibility as we move into 2021.

Kind regards,

Miss Samantha Cox

Headteacher

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