

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you keeping well and safe and enjoying what is left of the summer holiday with your children. We are really looking forward to welcoming the children back to school in September.

There are a few updates which we need to share with you. We have been working extremely hard to prepare the school for the safe return of your children. Below are a few reminders of the expectations of the school.

- **Please ensure that you have checked the start date** for your child/ren in week 1 and remember that they will **only be in school on one day**. All children will return again on the 7th September 2020.
- Following changes to Government Guidelines we would **significantly prefer all children to wear a face covering** when they enter the school grounds and when they leave school with the exception of nursery children.
- We will provide all children with a resealable bag that they can put their face covering into during the school day.
- All staff will be wearing a face covering at all times around the school except when they are in their classroom.
- All face coverings should be appropriate and must not be a distraction to the learning of all children.
- **It is extremely important to ensure that your child arrives in school at the designated time.** During these unprecedented times arriving late will create significant risks for both children and staff.
- Please remember to send your child to school with a coat, labelled water bottle and a lunchbox if required, no other equipment from home is needed.
- Please do not send your child to school if they or anyone in your household is showing symptoms of Covid-19.

Returning to school after the summer break can be challenging at the best of times, and it's likely this year will introduce some new challenges for returning to the classroom.

Here are some of our top tips to help make it as easy as possible for you and your child:

- Listen to your child's feelings and talk openly with them about what they might be looking forward to, or might be worried about.
- Encourage your child to think about the positives of returning to school – seeing their friends, making new friends, fun learning activities.
- Create opportunities for you and your child to talk about feelings and to provide comfort and support. Find some ideas here: <https://youngminds.org.uk/starting-a-conversation-with-your-child/starting-the-conversation/>
- Create a visual countdown so your child can plan mentally for what's ahead. You could use a calendar, a whiteboard, or they could make their own.
- Start adjusting your child back to more suitable routines about 2 weeks in advance. Shifting the time by 15 – 30 minutes at a time is easier than trying to do it in one go.
- Re-introduce some fun learning at home in the days approaching returning to school to help your child to start thinking about learning again: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach>
- Don't expect things to be the same as they were, or perfect straight away.
- Try some mindfulness activities with your child - listening to calming music, cloud watching, blowing bubbles, colouring in, or deep breathing: <https://www.netmums.com/child/mindfulnessactivities-for-kids#utm>

- Help your child to feel more confident by allowing them some choices and setting them small achievable goals.
- It is also important to your child that you be excited to hear about their experiences when they come home each day and empathise with what they found difficult.

If you're feeling anxious about your child returning to school or if you're unable to find any of the information you need, you can call Early Help on 01793 465050 for support and advice.

You can also visit our website for any information you may need on Swindon schools, including contact details for local primary and secondary schools:

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20032/schools_and_education

Don't forget to visit the website for more information and if you haven't already done so, watch the videos from your child's new teacher with your child. These can be found on the Drove Facebook Page.

Best Wishes,



Mrs Swanson
Principal