



**9th October 2020**  
**Autumn Term—Newsletter 3**

Thank you to all of you who have already completed our Parent Survey. This will close at 5pm on Friday 9th October, so if you haven't already shared your views with us, please do this to help us gain a clear picture on how you are finding the return to school and ways in which we are operating.

On my last check we had received 129 responses which is just over 40% of families within our school. Your views matter to us and help us to improve, so please do follow this link if you haven't already. Once we have collated all of the information we will share this with you and use this information to evaluate how we are doing and what we need to continue to work on.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2JD5ZK9>

**Risk Assessment and Updates**

We review our school risk assessment each week and continue to follow and adhere to the Government advice and guidelines. We adhere to the following document 'Guidance for full opening: Schools' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>) which was last updated on October 1st 2020. We use the Local Authority Risk Assessment format which again is updated as guidance changes. This document, once updated each week is shared with staff, governors and our Academy Trust and where needed, documents such as staff handbooks are updated and information clearly shared.

We continue to review our practices daily and address any concerns that arise. We are very proud of how well the children have adapted to the new ways of working, but understand that no matter what is in place, there will be times when additional reminders are needed and systems need to be tweaked. Rest assured, the safety and wellbeing of all our children and staff is and will continue to be at the forefront of all we do.

**School Council**

Our School Council representatives are already doing a fantastic job of gaining the views from classes about the return to school. We have been so proud of how well the majority of children have settled back in to school life, despite the large number of changes since they were last in school. We asked the children questions about how they were finding the return and below are the key areas the children have fed back to us about what is working well and what they are finding challenging. They also had the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on matters which are being discussed and reviewed in classes.

**What has gone well?**

- Seeing my friends again/ friendships (Every class included a comment about this)
- Learning/ Learning new things/ Proper lessons again (Over 3/4 of classes included this in their response)
- Having a new teacher / liking my teachers (Half of the classes included something about relationships with staff)
- Being in a new class (Over 1/4 of classes included this)
- Maths (1/4 of classes included this)

**What have you found challenging?**

- Not being able to mix with friends from other classes/groups (Almost all classes included a comment about this)
- Social distancing (3/4 of classes have commented this is a challenge)
- Washing our hands so often (2/3 of classes mentioned this in their comments)
- Having to talk side to side and not face to face (Just under 2/3 classes mentioned this)

We have talked to the children about the challenges they are facing and continue to review procedures, whilst ensuring the safety of children and staff is at the forefront of what we do.



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**Reminders**

- **PLEASE ensure children are suitably dressed for the wet and cold weather. Classrooms are cooler than usual and we do try to get outside wherever possible so please make sure children have jumpers and coats with them.**
- **The gates do not open until 8.40am now, as was the case last year, so please be mindful that children are leaving a little later so large numbers of children are not waiting outside together before they open. We know all children can come in safely in 15 minutes, so this shouldn't cause a back log of cars etc. Before School Club now operates from 8am.**

**Timings of the school day...**

We do understand that many of you have found the longer school day helpful, with gaps between drop offs and earlier opening of gates a benefit. No school is able to permanently change the timings of the school day without consultation and our extended offer was always to support a safe return to school for all pupils. If we decided to consult on a permanent change, the consultation would be for the same amount of 'teaching hours'. Therefore if school started earlier, it would need to end earlier and if we finished later, we would need to start later. We will continue to monitor this over the coming weeks, but if you are interested in your child attending Before School Club, please contact the school office. If you have particular challenges due to the collection of children from Kings Park, please do contact both schools directly. I have spoken to Mrs Charmin about individual cases and between us, we have been able to find a satisfactory resolution.

**School Bus**

We absolutely understand that the sudden ending of the school bus has caused some families additional pressures and worries. I have still not found a viable option, but would like to update you on the challenges we are facing and reasons behind this:

1. The company who were running the bus, had a bus in the area but this is no longer the case. They would have to send a bus especially which would not be a financially viable option for them.
2. Due to changes in legislation, if there are more than 22 passengers on the bus then the bus has to be a PSVAR vehicle (Wheelchair friendly) and they do not have an available bus of this type.
3. Unless the route is an authorised route by the DVLA, which it seems ours was not, drivers are not legally able to take payment from individual passengers. This would mean the school would have to contract the bus company directly and take payments. I am sure there are legal implications to this in terms of liability for pupils on board, but there is also an issue of cost and payment.
4. I have been quoted roughly £200 a day from one company to do this (if they had a PSVAR bus available) but even if we had 50 children signed up daily (we would have to operate payment at least half termly) this would equate to £4 per child per day and with only 40 children this would be £5 per day per pupil

Unfortunately, Norfolk Transport only provide school transport where the distance criteria is met:

*Children 5 and over—2 miles and children 8 and over 3 miles.* The route which was in place does not meet this criteria.

I haven't given up and will continue to consider the options, talking to different companies. I just wanted to share with you the reasons this is still not resolved. We know the bus helped to reduce traffic on site and help families living further away from the school and with children at other schools so if we can make this happen, we will.