

Exwick Heights Primary School  
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Date Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

### School Re-opening

The Prime Minister today announced that Primary Schools will re-open to all pupils on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The Government believe that we are past the peak of the virus and so has asked schools to prepare for all children and young people to return, providing the data continues to support this action.

Here at Exwick Heights, we are looking forward to welcoming all children back to school and want to reassure parents and carers that we are fully prepared for this action. We recognise that there will be a great deal of anxiety for parents and carers as the lockdown restrictions begin to be eased and so we would like to begin by reassuring you that the safety of our school community will always be our number one priority. We understand that every individual's circumstances are different and we are very happy to be asked any questions or to discuss any concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact us!

**Exwick Heights Primary School will fully re-open to all pupils on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.**

### Arrangements for Re-Opening to all Pupils

**Video of the School Team:** We fully understand that returning to school after a long period of lockdown will require a careful transition. To help to prepare children for this, we have updated our 'Missing You' video to familiarise all of the children with the adults working around the school. This can be accessed by all children through their Wonde account in the Google Classroom section and will be available from Wednesday.

**Inform the Teacher Meetings:** As shared in my newsletter last half term, any parent or carer who feels that they would like to share information about their child's learning during the lockdown period will have the opportunity to book an online meeting with their child's teacher next week. These short meetings will enable parents and carers to inform the teacher about anything significant which may help their child to reintegrate back into school. For instance, if your child has really struggled with a particular area of learning and you feel anxious about this, it would be sensible to make sure that the teacher is aware so they can revisit this area of learning and support your child immediately. Similarly, if your child really flew through an area of learning and would benefit from further challenge, it would be very helpful to share this information. We will email a link to a calendar to enable any interested parent to select an appointment on Friday this week. The appointments will all be held during the week beginning Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March. Appointments are optional. If you feel that it is not necessary to meet with the teacher, that is absolutely fine – we are simply keen to offer every opportunity we can to support our families as the lockdown eases. Please remember that parents and carers can also email the school for the attention of their child's teacher using the usual [admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk) email address to share any information at any time.

## **Business as Usual**

Here at Exwick Heights, we would like to reassure you that we take every step in our power to ensure that our school is as safe as possible. We fully adhere to Government guidance whilst ensuring that our school is as familiar, and friendly, to our children as possible.

The below information is to remind you of our processes and procedures to help to protect our school community. This is unchanged from our approach since the start of this school year to ensure that things are as simple and familiar for our children as possible. We have been incredibly fortunate to have not had a class affected by Covid 19 so far – and want to continue to do everything in our power to keep it this way!

## **Access and Egress for our school site:**

Please refer to attached map for more information. Staff will also be on hand to support you each day! To enable a one way system to operate, we will unfortunately not be able to have a drop off system on the school site and politely remind parents that they will need to park or drop off away from the site to prevent congestion or danger for our school community. We will happily make individual arrangements for those with a disabled badge. Please contact our school office if this applies to you. Adults are only permitted on site if they are accompanying a child in our Foundations Stage or KS1 classes and only one adult is permitted per family to help us to minimise contacts.

## **Arrival:**

**KS2: Access to KS2 (Years 3 to 6) will only be via the main entrance**, located at the Gloucester Road end of Exwick Lane. Pupils in KS2 will enter the school site independently and are asked to leave their supervising adults prior to entering the main entrance, where they will be greeted by a member of school staff from 8.30am each morning. KS2 pupils will walk independently to their playgrounds and classrooms. We politely ask that any parent of a child based in KS2 contact the school office (telephone 01392 209030 or email [admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk)) to deliver any messages for teachers. This will mean that there are fewer adults on the school site each morning. **KS2 classrooms will open as usual at 8.40am and the school day will begin at 8.50am.**

**Year 2: Access for our Year 2 pupils will only be via the main entrance**, located at the Gloucester Road end of Exwick Lane. **Supervising adults** will be able to come onto the school site via the main entrance. They will follow the path around the building to the gates by the hall, opposite the staff car park. Parents are asked to say a quick goodbye here (next to our school hall), ready for the children to be greeted by our staff and supervised to the Year 2 playground. Parents can then continue to follow the one-way system to leave via the vehicle gates onto Exwick Lane. **Year 2 classrooms will open as usual at 8.40am and the school day will begin at 8.50am.**

**Year 1: Access for our Year 1 pupils will only be via the Peterborough Road pedestrian entrance.** The school day **will formally begin at 8.40am** (this is ten minutes earlier than normal) **for our Year 1 pupils.** Parents are asked to follow the one-way system around our Early Years building to drop children to their classroom door and then leave promptly via the slope from the main building up to Peterborough Road to prevent a large gathering. Please refer to the attached map to see this one way system. Class 1JW will walk down the slope towards the early years office and then turn right to their classroom. Classes 1SP and 1JM will walk down the slope and turn left, walking past the Reception classrooms to their Year 1 classrooms.

**Reception: Class RSB and RSD** classrooms will open at 8.45am, accessing the school site from Peterborough Road only. The school day **will formally begin at 8.50am.**

**Class RMD** will open at 8.50am, accessing the school site from Peterborough Road only. The school day **will formally begin at 8.55am.**

**Nursery Class:** The Nursery classroom will open at 8.55am, accessing the school site from Peterborough Road only. The school day **will begin at 9.00am.**

We politely remind all adults that they must be patient and adhere to social distancing guidelines. We also ask children and adults to wait away from the school site if they arrive earlier than their classroom's opening time, to prevent large gatherings and keep our footpaths clear.

### **Dismissal:**

#### **KS2:**

**The school day for pupils in KS2 (Years 3,4,5 and 6) ends at 3.20pm.** We ask that pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 meet parents and friends off of the school site to again enable us to prevent large gatherings. Children will walk from their playground to the closest exit gate on Exwick Lane.

**Pupils in Year 3** will be walked by the class teacher up to the 'Drop Off' zone by the main office area, where there will be a designated waiting area for any adults collecting Year 3 pupils. Once each child is released, we politely ask parents to join the one-way system to walk off of the school site, again adhering to the social distancing lines. Pupils in Year 3 are also legally able to leave the school site without being collected, so please inform us (again, by contacting the school office) if you are happy for this to happen to ensure that there is no confusion.

#### **KS1:**

**Year 2: The school day for pupils in Year 2 ends at 3.20pm.** One adult will need to collect. We will mark clear waiting areas for collecting adults for each class in the area between the Year 2 playground and the school hall. Teachers will release children to the waiting adult in this area, who will then depart along the designated painted path back to the front of the school, joining the one-way system and leaving via the vehicle gates.

**Year 1: The school day for pupils in Year 1 ends at 3.10pm.** One adult will need to collect. We will mark clear waiting areas for collecting adults outside of each classroom. Once the teacher releases each child to their collecting adults, they should follow the one-way system to leave via the Peterborough Road exit.

#### **Reception:**

**Class RSB and RSD: The school day for pupils in Class RSB and RSD ends at 3.15pm.** One adult will need to collect. We will mark clear waiting areas for collecting adults outside of each classroom. Once the teacher releases each child to their collecting adults, they should follow the one-way system to leave via the Peterborough Road exit.

**Class RMD: The school day for pupils in Class RMD ends at 3.20pm.** One adult will need to collect. We will mark clear waiting areas for collecting adults outside of the classroom. Once the teacher releases each child to their collecting adults, they should follow the one-way system to leave via the Peterborough Road exit.

#### **Nursery:**

**The lunchtime sessions ends at 12 noon and the afternoon session ends at 3.00pm.** An adult will need to collect. We will mark clear waiting areas for collecting adults outside of the classroom. Once the teacher releases each child to their collecting adults, they should leave the school site via the vehicle gates onto Exwick Lane.

#### **Uniform:**

All children are expected to wear school uniform, although we would ask that this is washed regularly to minimise cross-contamination. Our uniform is:

grey/black trousers (not leggings) or grey skirt or grey dress

white polo or cotton shirt

grey/white/black socks or tights;

Bottle green sweatshirt or cardigan (with or without the school logo);

and sturdy black school shoes or black trainers (with black laces).

In warm weather, green & white checked gingham dresses with plain white sandals or grey shorts may also be worn.

**Ventilation:** We will have our classroom doors and windows open at all times to ensure that each classroom is well ventilated. With the weather being so variable at the moment, I would recommend that layers are considered to ensure that your child remains comfortable when at school. A coat should be sent to school every day too – the weather here in Exwick can be notorious for suddenly pouring with rain at the end of the school day!

#### **Belongings:**

We hope to minimise items being brought into school from home each day. Children in Years 1 to 6 will require a PE kit, but this should remain in school, only going home to be washed. They will only need an outdoor coat, a water bottle and, if appropriate, their packed lunch. Thank you for your support with this. Older children may wish to have a pencil case, but this is not necessary and if a child brings this into school, we ask that it remains in school, rather than travelling to and from school each day. Children will not be allowed to bring toys or other items from home into school. However, we understand that occasionally, a child may need to bring in other items for after school. If this is unavoidable, bags for this purpose will be stored externally and will not be permitted in the classroom. We understand that children like to have a 'school bag', but this is not part of our school uniform and we strongly encourage parents and carers not to send a school bag into school during the pandemic, if at all possible. Thank you for your support and understanding regarding this.

### Gatherings:

Current research suggests that the most concerning aspect of re-opening schools is that this may encourage adults to gather. Please help us to keep our school community safe by only attending school if you have to. If you enjoy completing the school run, but have an older child, could you meet them a little further away from the school to help to minimise the number of adults gathering around the school? As restrictions are eased and we are permitted to meet with up to more than one person outside (from the 29<sup>th</sup> of March), perhaps the school run could be shared with another family, so only one adult attends each day to collect children? Any action you can take to help us to minimise the number of people in our school's vicinity would be very welcome!

As a school, we recognise that staggered start and finish times cause significant challenge for parents with children in more than one year group and are also problematic for working parents. We have attempted to minimise disruption by making any alteration to the usual school day as small as possible and prevent longer periods of groups of adults waiting for children at the end of the school day. To support us with this, please do not arrive at school significantly in advance of the end of the school day to help to ensure that any gathering is for a very short period of time only.

We also ask all adults to wear facial coverings when completing the school run. Thank you.

**Report a positive COVID-19 result** – If a member of our school community has a positive test result, it is imperative that we are informed as soon as possible so we are able to contact the PHE local health protection team (HPT) and the DfE. We have created the following email address for parents to use to **report a positive result for a child at our school only:** [reportpositive@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk](mailto:reportpositive@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk)

Please note, this email address should not be used for any other communication. After receiving notification of a positive test, we will follow the DfE guidance, seeking advice about the appropriate response from the above agencies. We will inform any person required to isolate, along with the wider school community of the positive case and required actions. This will be by both email and text message.

### Messages:

As parents and carers will be unable to go into classrooms to speak to school staff, we ask that any urgent message for the teacher (for instance, if your child is concerned about any aspect of school, or if you wish to inform the teacher about something which may impact) are emailed to the school admin address ([admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk)) by 8am to ensure that we are able to forward them directly to the teacher before their class arrives. The teacher will be unable to respond to these emails prior to the start of the school day but please be reassured that they will receive it and be able to act upon it. After 8am, the school telephone number may be used but if your message is not urgent, we ask that the email address is used to ensure that the switchboard is not inundated with calls!

The school Senior Leadership Team will be outside to meet and greet children daily, but I am afraid that they will not be able to engage in conversation with parents and carers at this time as their priority will need to be on the children. This will also help to minimise the number of face to face contacts our senior staff have. Please respect these procedures to enable us to keep our community as safe as possible.

### In Other News...

**World Book Day** – As shared in my last newsletter, this annual, international event is being celebrated on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March. We hope that everyone will be able to celebrate the magical world of books on this date with us, to help to promote reading to our children. As always, if your child would like to dress up as a book character, we would love to receive photographs of them and would like to share these in our blog if parents are happy for this to happen? Please remember that dressing up as your favourite book character does not have to involve having to spend money! Many characters in children's books wear normal clothes. If you have access to paper, or indeed old cereal boxes, making a book cover which can then be attached to your child's clothes is a simple idea which looks really effective.

We are also keen to give all of our children an exciting experience and so would like to share a fantastic online event that is happening to help to bring children's literature alive. Arts Charity [settlestories.org.uk](http://settlestories.org.uk) will be recounting lesser known stories from Arabian Nights; there are two performances scheduled, one for children who are in KS1 and one for children in KS2:

KS1 performance ages 5-7 on Wednesday 3rd March 2021 9.30-10.15am

KS2 performance ages 7-11 on Wednesday 3rd March 2021 1.30-2.15pm

They will be using a platform called Crowdcast and it is free. To access it and gain more information, please follow this link:

[https://www.settlestories.org.uk/whats\\_on/world-book-day-2021/?qclid=EA1a1QobChMIzpyR4fXS7gIVh7PtCh0n3QufEAAAYASAAEgI2OPD\\_BwE](https://www.settlestories.org.uk/whats_on/world-book-day-2021/?qclid=EA1a1QobChMIzpyR4fXS7gIVh7PtCh0n3QufEAAAYASAAEgI2OPD_BwE)

Attached to this newsletter is a digital booktoken for £1 which each child can use to purchase a book. Please visit the World Book Day website for more information about £1 books...

**Comic Relief** - This year, Comic Relief is being held on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March. All children (and staff) can come to school in their own clothes as we are holding a non-uniform day to mark the occasion and allow a little fun and 'normality' for our children. Traditionally, we would collect donations for this charity on the day. However, we recognise the huge financial pressure that Covid 19 has put on families and so want to be very clear that there is no expectation – children can wear non-uniform regardless of whether or not they have made a donation. Anyone who would like to make a donation can do so through the School Gateway app.

Please do not hesitate to contact school if you have any questions about any aspect of this letter.  
With thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs C Neal  
**Headteacher**