



Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are really looking forward to welcoming all pupils back to Elm Grove on Monday March 8<sup>th</sup> 2021.

I would like to thank the whole school community again for the fantastic support during the school's partial closure and commend all families for their engagement and commitment to remote learning.

I am sure many of you and your children will be feeling a range of emotions about the return to school after this further long period of absence. Everyone at school is working really hard to prepare for the children's safe return. School staff not directly teaching year group pods in school on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March will spend the day preparing to welcome all children back on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. As a result Class DoJo feedback will cease on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March.

Things will operate in a similar way to the Autumn Term but I thought it would be helpful to highlight some key points so everyone is clear about timings and expectations:

- All children are expected to return to school on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, following our usual attendance procedures. Please contact myself, the school office or the Inclusion Team if you wish to discuss your child's attendance post lockdown.
- Staff will do everything they possibly can to reduce any worries or concerns the children might have and will support their transition back to school, reinforcing hand washing and all other COVID-19 safety measures.
- Children will have an initial settling period and will then resume learning, following similar curriculum content to what they have been studying during the lockdown. Learning will be sensitively and carefully assessed over the next four weeks. Outcomes will then inform future planning to help close any gaps that may have arisen during this period. Virtual parents' evenings will be planned for early in the summer term so parents and carers can discuss their child's learning and progress with their teacher.
- In order for the children to enter and leave the premises safely, we will continue to stagger the start and end of the school day. We appreciate this isn't without its inconveniences, especially for those families with more than one child at the school.

However, with only limited entrances to the building we hope you understand that pupil, staff and parent safety has to be our priority. It is especially important, in order to keep everyone safe, that children are dropped off and collected at exactly the right times (see table below).

- We also request that face coverings continue to be worn by all adults when dropping off or collecting their children.
- All adults on the school site will wear face coverings at all times apart from when they are working directly in their class pod or office area.
- Staff will greet the children each morning and wait with them to ensure they are collected at the end of the day.
- For children in Reception and Y1, the drop-off and pick-up point will continue to be at the **far end of the staff car park**.
- For Y2 upwards, we continue to ask that parents and carers drop off and pick up from **outside the school premises** – for the main terrace, please wait on the pavement to the right of the main gate (as you face the school building), and for the side terrace, please wait to the left of the main gate.
- **We ask for your support in keeping the walkways and pavements as clear as possible, with children entering via the main and side gates lining up along the school railings at their allotted time.**

Class	Start time	End time	Drop off and collection point
Reception - Apple	8.55am	3.05pm	School car park
Reception - Cherry	9.05am	3.15pm	School car park
Year 1 - Beech	8.50am	3.00pm	School car park
Year 1 - Birch	9.00am	3.10pm	School car park
Year 2 - Bonsai	8.50am	3.00pm	Main Terrace
Year 2 - Baobab	8.50am	3.00pm	Side Terrace (via side gate on Elm Grove, near bike shelter)
Year 3 - Holly	9.05am	3.20pm	Main Terrace
Year 3 – Horse Chestnut	9.05am	3.20pm	Side Terrace (via side gate on Elm Grove, near bike shelter)
Year 4 - Cedar	9.00am	3.15pm	Main Terrace
Year 4 - Cypress	9.00am	3.15pm	Side Terrace (via side gate on Elm Grove, near bike shelter)
Year 5 - Rowan	9.10am	3.25pm	Main Terrace
Year 5 - Redwood	9.10am	3.25pm	Side Terrace (via side gate on Elm Grove, near bike shelter)

Year 6 - Oak	8.55am	3.10pm	Main Terrace
Year 6 - Elder	8.55am	3.10pm	Side Terrace (via side gate on Elm Grove, near bike shelter)

- Each class will continue to operate within its own ‘pod’ with consistent staff members. At break and lunchtimes outside this will become a year group pod and children in the same year group will be able to play together. The school will therefore be able to track and trace any adult or pupil who has interacted within the pod, should someone test positive for COVID-19. The school will contact Public Health England for guidance if this is the case and the expectation *could* be for the class pod to quarantine at home for the required number of days. The school would then re-establish home learning via our Class DoJo system. The name of any adult or child testing positive would be kept confidential.
- We ask that you monitor your child carefully and do not bring your child to school if they, or another household member, are symptomatic. (ie unwell with a new or continuous cough, high temperature, loss/change of taste or smell etc.) Equally, we ask that you follow Public Health England guidance should your child or any family member show symptoms and require a test.
- **Rapid lateral flow testing for households and bubbles of school pupils and staff:**  
 Around 1 in 3 people with coronavirus (COVID-19) do not have symptoms but can still pass it on to others. Regular testing of people without symptoms (asymptomatic testing) is important to help stop the virus spreading.  
 On Sunday 28 February, the Department of Health and Social Care announced that from Monday 1 March, households with primary school, secondary school and college age children, including childcare and support bubbles, can test themselves twice every week at home as schools return from Monday 8 March. Households, childcare and support bubbles of primary, secondary and college staff can also be tested. Elm Grove staff have been undertaking lateral flow testing for the last month and will continue to do so. Twice-weekly testing will also be offered to adults working in the wider school community, including bus drivers and after school club leaders. The twice-weekly test kits can be accessed:
  - via employers if they offer testing to employees
  - at a local test site
  - by collecting a home test kit from a test site
  - by ordering a home test kit online

Schools are not able to give test kits to parents, carers or household members. Letters containing advice on where to access testing will be sent to parents and carers shortly.

- The children will be asked to wear their school uniform as usual but they still do not need to bring in a PE kit. Instead the children will do PE in their uniform, so we ask that this is comfortable and that they can move around easily in it, including their footwear.
- Break and lunch times will also be staggered. With this in mind we suggest that KS2 children bring in an extra healthy snack as they might need to wait longer than usual to have their lunch (for example additional fruit, vegetables or healthy snack bars – not foods high in sugar or salt please). The daily free fruit scheme for children in Reception – Year 2 is operating so KS1 children will not need to bring a fruit snack to school.
- All children will be able to order a hot lunch from a 2-choice menu at the usual price. Dietary needs can be catered for as usual, as long as the school has been informed of these in writing.
- Children in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 will eat their lunch, one year group at a time, in the school restaurant. There will be time between each year group sitting to allow for the tables to be cleaned.
- Children in Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 will eat in their classrooms, whether having a packed lunch or a school dinner. Their tables will also be cleaned before and after eating.
- Children from Reception to Year 6 will always be escorted to the toilet by an adult. This is to make sure children from different pods do not meet and burst the pod 'bubble'.
- We are requesting that any unnecessary belongings are kept at home but do ask that the children come equipped for the weather of the day as they will play in their playground in all weather (unless it is unsafe to do so). **This means that if there is any realistic chance of rain, all children must have a coat in school.**
- In order to keep classrooms well-ventilated, windows will be kept open, so on colder days your child might need to bring a sweatshirt, etc.
- All children **must** have a named WATER BOTTLE at school.
- As bags including books bags are being brought in from home, they will be kept on children's pegs instead of their drawers, so it's a good idea to make sure that the bags are not bulky, that they don't have lots of keyrings on them, and that they have handles that can be used to keep them on the children's pegs.
- The school ordered an individual pencil case for each child last term, these are equipped with all the resources they need. These will remain at school and be kept in their own personal drawer, so for now they should not bring in their own stationery or pencil cases, or indeed any other 'toys'.
- Mr Waring has sent out separate information regarding the extra-curricular clubs which will resume as the school fully reopens. The clubs have been carefully risk assessed and are offered to one year group at a time. We will keep KS2 families updated whether swimming sessions can resume once we receive more information and guidance. All public swimming pools are closed until mid-April at the earliest.

- EGOOSC (Elm Grove Out Of School Club) will operate a breakfast and after-school club following government guidance. The club will maintain the school's pod system.
- If any children bring face coverings to school they should be named, and parents and carers must provide a suitable sealed bag for them to be kept in when not in use. We also ask that children are taught at home how to remove their face covering safely without touching their face or the main body of the mask.
- Sadly, we are not currently able to welcome parents, carers or volunteers into the school building, apart from in an emergency. Please email or phone with any questions or concerns you may have.
- In the interests of promoting physical activity and in order to reduce the demand on public transport at busy times of the day, both local and national government recommend that children take an active journey to and from school as often as possible (eg walking, cycling, scooting)
- The school plans to maintain the additional cleaner after lunch each day for the time being. This is so all toilets get an extra clean during the day and rubbish can be collected from classrooms after lunch.

**ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO CLAIM FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS? THIS CAN HELP THE SCHOOL AS WELL AS YOU AND YOUR CHILD:**

We are very aware that recent times have proved financially challenging for many of our families. Please contact the school office or the Inclusion Team ([InclusionTeam@elmgrove.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:InclusionTeam@elmgrove.brighton-hove.sch.uk)) if you feel your child might now be eligible for Pupil Premium funding. The school staff can check an online system. If you are, as well as receiving a free school meal, your child will also be able to benefit from reduced club and residential costs (when they commence again). Even if your child already gets a free lunch (Reception – Y2) or prefers a packed lunch, the school receives additional funding which is used very carefully to support learning opportunities.

Please find a number of other documents attached with this message. These include: an updated whole school risk assessment, a letter about Poverty Proofing the School Day, 2021-22 School Term Dates and the summary outcome from our recent parent/carers remote learning survey. Thank you to everyone who responded. The vast number of positive responses expressing thanks and appreciation were very welcome and suggestions to develop provision further taken on board.

I sincerely hope this will prove to be our final lockdown and things will continue to gradually and carefully improve for everyone. I will endeavor to keep you fully informed of any updates or changes.

With best wishes,  
*Louise Willard*