



Friday 4th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are delighted to be opening our doors to all Meridian children starting next week. Whilst things will be a little different, it will certainly be lovely to have our whole community back together under one roof again! As such, I thought it would be helpful to write to you with some key information about children's return to school to peruse over the weekend.

Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 will come back to school on Monday 7th September and Year 1 and Year 2 on Tuesday 8th September. Existing Nursery children will come back to school on Tuesday 8th and new Nursery and Reception children will start the following week. Hopefully you will have received the school text/email reminders this week, but if in any doubt, all start and finish times are on the school website (Frequently Asked Questions).

As you know, there is a clear expectation from the government that all children should return to school this term. Please find full information for parents here: [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges in the autumn term](#) If you have any questions or concerns about your child returning to school, please do contact us.

In supporting children's transition back into school, we are clear that we will need to balance the need to nurture children's emotional well-being with the need to identify any gaps in children's learning so we can accelerate their progress. We need to do all of this within the context of making school as safe as possible for all members of our community. As promised, we have planned carefully and thoroughly for all children to return to school, keeping the best interests of the children in our care firmly in mind. We have the advantage of being able to move forward with some experience under our belts; our plan is based on that which was working well in school last term. We have updated our Meridian Coronavirus FAQ to reflect any changes to government guidance and our risk assessment. Key points are below for ease of reference.

Parents/carers can help us in the following ways. Please do...

- send your child into school with a refillable water bottle which they can refill during the school day and label this clearly with your child's name. (Children will keep their water bottle on their desk as well as taking it out to play and to the lunch hall. Please note that the playground fountain is not in use.)
- talk to us if you have any questions or concerns - sadly there is a lot of misinformation being circulated via social media and we can help to clarify facts for you.
- dress your child in clothes (including suitable footwear) which allow for daily physical exercise - in addition to daily physical exercise led by class teachers, children will have one longer PE lesson each week.
- dress your child warmly - windows throughout the school will be kept open to improve ventilation.
- try your best to be punctual for drop-off and pick-up times and leave the playground as soon as you can - whilst we would love you to stay and chat, we need to keep the flow in and out of the playground as smooth as possible.

- return any reading books or loaned laptops to school with your child next week.
- ensure that children put away their own scooters and bicycles by the blue sheds - whilst members of staff can help, parents/carers will need to wait on the white playground spots.
- limit what your child brings into school from home - a packed lunch (where relevant), refillable water bottle, a piece of fruit if you wish and a reading book. It would be a great help to us if you can keep your child's bag as small as possible (e.g. a school book bag or something similar in size rather than a bulky rucksack).
- think of alternatives to birthday food treats - if you want to send in a birthday treat for your child's class, consider donating a book to your child's class which they can enjoy at storytime.

Does my child need to wear a mask at school?

No. Government guidance states that this is not required for primary school settings as children and staff are mixing in consistent groups and because misuse may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. The measures outlined in our FAQ will keep school as safe as possible and children should not wear masks within our school.

If a child arrives at school wearing a face covering, they must sanitise their hands as they arrive through the school gate. Without touching the front of the covering, they should remove it and place it in a plastic bag to take home with them, or if it is a disposable one, they should put it in the bin straight away. They should then wash their hands using the playground sink.

Will Breakfast Club and Play Club be available?

Breakfast Club and Play Club will reopen on 14th September. We are still considering the logistics of this in relation to DfE guidance. We will survey parents/carers at the start of next week and advise them of the new arrangements as soon as we can.

Can parents/carers come into the school building?

Unfortunately not. Parents/carers can come into the playground but they cannot come into the school building for any reason at this time. This is to support the safety of the whole school community. You can communicate with the School Office via phone/email. If you need to talk to a member of staff, we can arrange a phone call at a mutually convenient time.

Can I speak to my child's teacher at the start or end of the day?

Your child's teacher may be able to come and talk to you whilst you are on the playground but it may not be possible. You can talk to Jo or Jane on the playground or we can arrange for the class teacher to ring you.

Can my child have a cooked school lunch?

Yes. Happily, Donna and her team have reopened the school kitchen and are looking forward to serving hot meals again. For those who pay, school dinners will be £2.75 from September. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are all entitled to universal free school meals.

Have a lovely weekend. The whole staff team very much look forward to seeing you soon.

Best wishes,

Jo

Jo Graham, Headteacher