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Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to give you some information regarding September opening. I will give you as much information as I can now so that you can prepare for your child's return. I will send more detailed information in the week before your child starts back on Monday 7th September. As you know the government expects all children to return to school from September 2020 now that the prevalence of coronavirus has reduced and *for the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from coronavirus.*

At Northfield Manor, staff will return on Tuesday 1st September for training and all children (except our new Reception cohort) are expected to be in school on **Monday 7th September**. The government guidance (see link below) published 02.07.20 outlines the overriding benefits of all children returning to school in terms of their social and emotional well-being as well as their cognitive and academic development. The guidance specifies *a hierarchy of control to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level*. Northfield Manor's updated risk assessment has been written in line with this guidance and the individual context of the school. When this risk assessment has been 'signed off' by Victoria Academies Trust, I will share it with you.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

It is worth bearing in mind that this guidance is under constant review and there may be updates before we return in September.

What will school be like from September?

Schools must do everything possible to minimise contacts and mixing while delivering a broad and balanced curriculum. Therefore:

The Curriculum and Teaching

- All subjects will be taught by the class teacher as usual.
- Peripatetic teachers (such as our music teachers) are now able to return. Some subjects (such as PE or Music) may require adaptations in order to be taught safely.
- To avoid mass gatherings whole school assemblies cannot occur face to face.
- Desks will be front facing as directed by the guidance. Reception and Year 1 will still have access to 'provision' rather than formal desk-based teaching.
- Educational visits will not take place initially, but this will be reviewed at half-term.
- A 'recovery curriculum' will initially be taught (alongside other subjects) in the form of a topic called *History in the Making*. This includes a strong focus on PSHE and pupil well-being.
- The school SEND department will provide interventions and support as usual. External professionals such as our Speech Therapist and Educational Psychologist will resume visits.

Transition

In September, transition activities will continue while your child gets to know their new teacher and settles back into school. If you think your child is unusually anxious about returning to school please don't hesitate to contact us before we start back so that we can help.

Pupil Groupings or 'Bubbles'

Pupils will be in 'bubbles' - however, these groups or bubbles can now be much larger - the size of normal classes, year groups or phases. Where possible we will only mix up to a year group inside the building and up to a phase group if outside. Playtimes will be staggered and playground areas will be zoned.

Pupil drop-off and collection

These will need to be staggered to avoid mixing of groups and crowding around the school. No teaching time will be lost due to these changes. Parents will not be allowed on site during these times as it is not possible to ensure safe social distancing. You can see that at drop-off there is a 10-minute window of time to help prevent crowding and to ensure children who may feel anxious do not feel rushed. In Key Stage 1 teachers and teaching assistants will meet their children at the Key Stage 1 playground gate. I will send you more detailed information about how you will drop off and collect in September as I know this may be of concern to Key Stage 1 parents and children moving from Key Stage 1 to 2.

	Drop-off Time	Location	Collection Time	Location
Year 1	8.45am-8.55am	KS1 playground	3.20pm	KS1 playground
Year 2	8.30-8.40am	KS1 playground	3.10pm	KS1 playground
Year 3	8.45am-8.55am	KS2 playground (Through the Main Reception entrance for the first week).	3.20pm	Breakfast club entrance
Year 4	8.30-8.40am	KS2 playground	3.10pm	Breakfast club entrance/exit
Year 5	8.45am-8.55am	KS2 playground	3.20pm	KS2 entrance/exit
Year 6	8.30-8.40am	KS2 playground	3.10pm	KS2entrance/exit

Wrap-around Care (Parent paid Breakfast and After-school Club)

This will start from w/b 14th September. The organization and staffing of these groups will be more complex as year groups and phases normally mix. I will contact you to let you know how this can work safely. Places may need to be limited. If you have not yet let us know if you would like a place for your child, please do so as soon as possible through the school office.

Other Clubs

Clubs will not take place initially. This will be reviewed at half-term.

School Lunches

We will offer school lunches including a hot option. In order to run the kitchen safely, there may need to be a reduced menu offer. Children can bring their own packed lunch if they prefer. I will send you more information regarding this in the w/b 31st August.

Breaktime Snacks and Drinks

Snacks and drinks (other than water) will not be available initially except for children receiving free school milk. Please send your child with a healthy breaktime snack. If your child is entitled to free school milk, you will receive an email regarding this from w/b 31st August.

School Uniform and Lost Property

Children will be required to wear full school uniform as normal and have a PE kit in school every day. Should you need to collect any lost property from this year (or wish to donate uniform to Rubery Swap Shop) you will be emailed in w/b 31st August regarding dates and times to collect/donate.

Stationery and Equipment

Children will be provided with their own stationery by school. They should not bring their own stationery or other items such as toys or games. Any shared equipment will be managed by the teacher and cleaned between uses.

School Books

You child's school books from this year will be sent home with your child in the first week.

Communication between Parents and School

We will continue to communicate through the school office email (administration and the Senior Leadership Team) and with the teacher through Class Dojo. When meetings are needed these can be arranged in the first instance via telephone or video conferencing. Face to face meetings can be arranged with notice should these options not be appropriate.

In summary, while there will still be some restrictions in place, Northfield Manor will be much more like the school the children and teachers are used to. We are all very keen to see the children learn and socialize in a more normal school environment and I believe the vast majority of children will settle very well and be happy to be back.

I hope this information enables you to make your initial arrangements for September. I will confirm this information and add more detail after the summer holiday. I will also give you more information about statutory or other changes to the school year. If there is anything else that you think you will need to know before we break for the holiday, then please contact me via the school office.

Yours faithfully
Mrs Pennington

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