



6 September 2021

Dear parents

I hope you all enjoyed a great summer break! I spent far too much time starrng at the BBC weather app looking for the summer heatwave that never arrived. At the same time, it was lovely to enjoy a proper rest with family and friends. We are really excited to welcome you all back and commence the 2021-22 school year!

I want to take the opportunity to update you on plans prior to the return to school. The good news is we are thankfully into much brighter covid times. With the vaccine now widely available, those that wish to be vaccinated have been. We also return to more relaxed guidance regarding positive cases which should mean Avonwood remains consistently open for all to attend. For many, this new tact will be deemed very good news, but I'm conscious for some anxieties around the virus will remain. Our overriding priority is to keep Avonwood open for all, with common-sense safety mitigation measures that enable the continuation of high-quality teaching and learning. With this in mind, we are operating a positive yet cautious mantra that you will see detailed in the points below:

Positive Cases

You no longer need to notify the school of positive cases within your wider household. Updated guidance dictates that only the person that tested positive now needs to isolate for 10 days. All other members of the household are free to continue their lives as normal without isolating. The only exception is if you are notified directly by test and trace that you are a close contact and instructed to isolate. No children under 18 will be deemed close contacts, regardless of circumstances, so children are free to live normally regardless of interactions with covid positive staff, friends or family.

Should your child test positive, please keep them home for 10 days as per advice that will be provided by the test and trace team. Just report their absence as normal via our absence line (01202 727910). Their siblings should continue to attend school as normal.

Community Wide Notification of Cases

We have been advised that moving forward, the notification to our wider school community of positive covid cases is no longer recommended. This is due to managing covid outbreaks in a similar manner to traditional viruses like winter flu. I will continue to run Avonwood in a transparent manner, but updates will be briefer and form part of the weekly newsletter instead.

Voluntary Testing

The government recommend one of the best mechanisms for avoiding high infection rates in school is the use of voluntary home lateral flow testing kits. By conducting these tests twice weekly it means infection should be picked up earlier, reducing the risk of spread in school. These tests are voluntary, but if you would like to participate then kits can be ordered at the link below:

www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

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Drop Off and Pick Up

We continue to expect the following:

- **Drop off and pick up to always be a calm experience.** Once on site, this is **not** play time. Children should be dropped off just in time and escorted directly to classrooms. If you arrive early, children should wait by your side until the classroom doors open.
- Children must walk on and off site by your side, mirroring our high expectations during the school day. They must not run on ahead unsupervised.
- Children are not to use our play equipment or other playground apparatus.
- Staff and parents may wear a face covering if they wish to do so.
- We continue to ask parents to avoid close contact with staff, respecting the red drop off markers outside the classroom.

It goes without saying that all children must be escorted to and from school by an adult. Waiting with their child until entry to the classroom. The site is unsupervised, so this is the only way to make sure your child safely arrives at school. The only exception is children in years 5 & 6 with written prior approval from school to independently travel to and from school.

By helping make the journey to school in the morning calm and ordered, it sets the tone for a great day ahead at school.

Drop off & Pick Up times:

Year Group	Drop Off Window	Pick Up
EYFS & Key Stage 1	08:50 – 09:00	15:05
Key Stage 2	08:40 – 08:50	15:15

Note: If your child has a younger sibling in EYFS or Key Stage 1 then you may drop them off during the earlier 08:40 – 08:50 window, after dropping off the older Key Stage 2 child.

Drop off / Pick Up Locations

The following locations are used for drop off and pick up:

Year Group	Drop Off Location	Pick Up Location
EYFS	Classroom Door	Classroom Door
Year 1	Classroom Door	Classroom Door
Year 2	Classroom Door	Classroom Door
Year 3	Willow & Elm: Year 3 Compound Gate Silver Birch: MUGA	MUGA (all Year 3 classes)
Year 4	Classroom Door	Classroom Door
Year 5	Classroom Door	Classroom Door
Year 6	Front Playground	Front Playground

Headteacher: Chris Jackson

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Children **must** be escorted to and from school, waiting by the side of parents until doors open. The only exception is children in Years 5 & 6 with walk to school agreements signed off by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

We are not expecting parents to follow one-way systems anymore, so you will notice many of the former covid markings slowly fading away.

Hygiene

We will continue to operate higher than normal levels of cleaning and personal hygiene. Children will be asked to wash hands at various times during the day.

Playtimes

You will be pleased to hear children may once again play outside with children from other classes. We have organised the playgrounds as follows:

Year Group	Playground Location
EYFS & Year 1	Front Playground (next to our reception office)
Years 2 & 3	Key Stage 1 playground (the one with the outdoor classroom)
Years 4, 5 & 6	Key Stage 2 playground (the one with the allotment)

Dinners

Historically, we used our school hall as a dining hall for all children. Where it is a challenge to clean between sittings, we plan for some year groups to eat in classrooms and some in the hall. The plan is as follows:

Year Group	Dining Location
EYFS, Year 1 and Year 3	Dining Hall
Years 2, 4, 5 & 6	Classrooms

Visiting School

We hope to return to normal this year with parents being able to attend in school for performances and shows. However, we are going to determine this on a event-by-event basis. Where we can offer a similar quality of provision online (e.g. parent evenings and workshops) then we may do so. Our goal is for all parents to be able to attend some form of school shows again later this year. I am also keen for parents to be able to view exercise books, so we may introduce some form of open afternoons to supplement online parent evenings.



Uniform

Children should continue to attend school in PE kit on their two designated PE days. The days are as follows:

Year Group	PE Days
EYFS	Tuesday and Wednesday
Year 1	Monday and Thursday
Year 2	Monday and Wednesday
Year 3	Monday and Friday
Year 4	Tuesday and Wednesday
Year 5	Tuesday and Thursday
Year 6	Wednesday and Thursday

We continue to hold the highest of expectations with our uniform. On PE days, all children should attend in the official branded PE T-Shirt which is available from Stevensons. Further details about our uniform policy can be found at the link below:

www.avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk/parents/uniform

Please take time to read this as it helps avoid any misunderstandings.

Access to Online Live Teaching

From September, this will only be available to those children self-isolating due to testing positive but are fit and well. Children under the age of 18 are no longer expected to isolate, so unless they have tested positive, they should be in school.

Front Office

Our front office is one of the very few poorly ventilated spaces in our school. We therefore encourage parents to pick up the phone or email where possible. If you need to urgently speak to someone, you may pop into the front office but please only do so if you really need to.

Speaking to staff

We always encourage parents to speak to us regarding any concerns at the earliest opportunity. Members of the Senior Leadership Team are on the playground at drop off and pick up every day. We also continue to operate year group email addresses, as detailed below:

Year Group	Email Address
EYFS	foundationteam@avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Year 1	year1team@avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Year 2	Year2team@avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Year 3	Year3team@avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Year 4	Year4team@avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Year 5	Year5team@avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Year 6	Year6team@avonwoodprimaryschool.org.uk



These email accounts are monitored by the Year Leaders. We ask staff to endeavour to reply within two working days. You may of course chat to staff at drop off and pick up, but please respect them by remaining 2m apart. They will always be happy to call back later if required too.

After School Clubs / Foundation Play

These will recommence from the week starting Monday 20th September. Where year groups may once again mix, we hope this will help more of our clubs to re-launch. We will speak to the various external club providers ASAP and update you when we can. In the meantime, the Foundation Play team are ready to support any working families with care before and after school from Tuesday 7th September.

Car Park Markings

You will notice we have invested in new updated car park markings over the summer. These new markings are still being installed and are due for completion by the end of this week. The updated markings should make it easier than ever to know where you are permitted to park. It should go without saying, but please only ever park in an allocated space signified by a white line. There is no excuse for ever parking on double yellow lines or on the yellow cross hatch boxes. If a space is not available, you must find an alternative safe place to park off site. Should these markings not be followed, the next stage (and last resort) would be to sadly close the car park to general public access. If friends or family are picking up, please make sure you pass on this important message.

I hope you have found these updates helpful. As always, if you have any questions then please do not hesitate to get in touch. Last year was certainly an eventful one, but I'm very confident this year we'll see a return to much more normality. If we make it to Christmas with no closures and a capacity crowd at our EYFS Nativity Play then I'll know it's been a successful autumn term... fingers crossed!

See you all tomorrow

Mr Jackson

Head Teacher