



20 September 2021

Re: Start of day arrangements

Dear Parents / Carers

Firstly, I would like to apologise that a large number of families did not receive our newsletter on Friday afternoon; I am investigating how this happened and I am disappointed as our communication has always been strong. In the newsletter I had explained our approach to the start of day arrangements. I appreciate that for many of you, reading the newsletter over the weekend and then being able to prepare your child for the change this morning would have helped pupils to come into school calmly.

We pride ourselves on our relationships with our parents, carers and the community. To this end, I wanted to write and explain our decision making more fully, as well as demonstrate that we are reflective in our approach and will always listen to your suggestions and concerns. I have also discussed this situation with our safeguarding governor, Maggie Fidler.

There are three main reasons which underpin my desire to keep our playground clear of additional adults in the mornings:

- I want your children to develop their independence now that they have joined our junior school. Coming into our secure playground without a guardian acts as a step along this journey.
- The school site becomes safer when there are less people physically entering the grounds.
- It acts as another mitigating factor in relation to Covid-19, further reducing the chance of the virus spreading.

We have an adult at each of the three gates so that children cannot leave the school site once you have passed them into our care. The gate to the right-hand side of our office area will remain closed. Additionally, the playground is staffed so that when children move to the rear of the school, they are supervised.

I have received some correspondence which suggests there is no point mitigating the risk of Covid-19 at the start of the school day only to allow parents onto the playground at the end of the day. However, by reducing risk for 50% of the time we may help ease the spread. Some parents have mentioned the space outside our school gates is now overcrowded, and I therefore urge you to give one another plenty of space.

Some parents/carers have raised the issue that the Portfield Road gate was particularly busy this morning. You may choose any route into school, and the other gates had far less traffic, so you may wish to select an alternative. Also, please keep in mind that the school gates open at 8:30am and are open until 8:50am, so you can stagger your arrival.

Finally, I acknowledge that the shift from having a parent on the playground through to being independent has progressed too quickly for some families. ***To this end, I have decided to reinstate the option for you to bring your child to their classroom door if this is your preference. However, to avoid congestion, we respectfully ask you to do this only from 8:40-8:50am once the classroom doors are open.*** I maintain that there is a need to keep the playground clear of additional adults between 8:30-8:40am. I will monitor this situation over the coming weeks, but ask you to continue to encourage your child to come in independently.

Many thanks for your patience while we work through this. Our positive relationships with you are integral to the success of your children.

Yours truly

Mr S Fuller
Headteacher.