

17th July

Dear Dunsford families,

I hope that you and your families are all keeping safe and well. It feels very strange that we have reached the end of another academic year and that we have not been able to celebrate the usual milestones in the ways that we are accustomed to.

I cannot thank you all enough for the lovely messages that have been sent into school to welcome me into the Dunsford community and for the warm words of encouragement from those of you who I have been privileged to speak with and meet so far. Your support has been extremely encouraging and I am very grateful to you all for this.

I am aware that we are currently moving through a period of ongoing change, both in terms of COVID 19 and also the changes at Dunsford Community Academy as we move forwards into the new academic year. I recognise that change can often be a period of unrest, but I am hoping that the changes that we are moving towards in September will also be a time of potential and new opportunities for us all to look forward to together as a community.

#### Information regarding changes

Unfortunately, we have recently heard that we will be saying goodbye to Mrs Kersey for this coming academic year. Mrs Kersey will not be leaving the Learning Academy Partnership permanently, but she has asked for a year's sabbatical during this time of a national pandemic. This is an unexpected change to the structure that was expected for next year, but please rest assured that both myself and Mrs Stephens are doing everything that we can to ensure that we appoint a teacher who is passionate about Dunsford, the children and the wider community. You may well have seen our advert, which has attracted a lot of attention from some quality candidates, and we are very excited about this. As soon as we have appointed someone, we will let you all know.

Mrs Kersey has been working exceptionally hard during this difficult time of partial school closures to ensure that the children have had access to online learning and feedback and we cannot thank her enough for her dedication during this time. We support Mrs Kersey in the decision that she has made for next year; we wish her well and look forward to welcoming her back to the Learning Academy Partnership in September 2021. I am sure that you will all join us in extending our heartfelt thanks and the warmest of wishes to Mrs Kersey for the year ahead.

Mrs Kersey writes:

*'With careful consideration and deliberation after a recent meeting with my son's consultant at the end of last week, I will be taking on the role of full time medical carer for my son who has multiple complex chronic medical conditions during the coming autumn and winter months due to the potential consequences of Coronavirus.'*



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## TOGETHER WE EMPOWER EXCELLENCE

*I and the Trust feel a sabbatical year will enable me to fulfil this role and takes into account the great importance to me and the Trust of enabling the continuity of education and wellbeing for the children who I would have been teaching in September. Although I will now not physically be at Dunsford for the new academic year, I have said to Mrs Guntrip and Mrs Stephens that I am more than willing to support them in any way I am able to in the coming months. I will miss the children, their families and the Dunsford staff team enormously during this time but I do intend to keep in touch, and I will be continuing my educational professional development during this time.*

*I wish all the children and their families a very happy and enjoyable summertime and congratulate you all on your adaptability, energy, perseverance and good spirits during the last few months with home school learning and bubbles in the school setting. You have all done wonderfully well. I would like to thank you all in advance for your understanding of this challenging and complex situation that the Coronavirus has had upon my family.*

*Very best wishes to you all and take good care,*

*Mrs Amanda Kersey'*

Unfortunately, we are also saying goodbye to Miss Lloyd who has decided that she will not be returning to Dunsford from September. Although she has not been with us for long, Miss Lloyd has worked extremely hard during partial school closures to provide online learning and support for children and we are exceptionally thankful for her enthusiasm and effort. We would like to take this opportunity to wish her well for the future.

Miss Lloyd writes:

*'After careful consideration, I have decided to take a year away from the classroom in order to focus on supporting my family and my own health. I know this decision, although difficult, is the right path for me to take at this current time. Being a class teacher at Dunsford, albeit for a short period, has been an enriching experience. I feel fortunate to have been part of such a tight knit, talented and supportive community of staff and pupils.'*

#### Critical Information:

Government guidance regarding symptoms remains unchanged at this time. **Anyone who is displaying symptoms of Coronavirus should not attend school.** Please notify the school office if you feel that this applies to you and we will be able to offer you advice on the next steps that you should take.

#### Infection Control on site:

As set out in the government guidance, we will have strict measures of infection control in place throughout school. Our arrangements at Dunsford have been very carefully thought through, in consultation with Dunsford staff and colleagues across the Trust; they will also be kept under constant review. For example, we will be ensuring that:



- there is frequent handwashing for both children and staff,
- both staff and children will be adopting a 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- social distancing will be in place.

Further whole school staff training will take place on Wednesday 2nd September, so every single member of staff is fully prepared and confident to welcome the children back safely the following day.

We have updated our risk assessment for parents and families, which is available on the website. As you can see, many measures are flagged up as 'green', though some remain 'amber' as we cannot guarantee to eliminate all risk. Please do take a look and get back to us if you have any queries.

#### Attendance from September:

**The government guidance states that all pupils are expected to return to school at the beginning of the autumn term in September. Attendance for all children on our school roll will be compulsory.** If you feel that your child will not be able to return to school in September, then please contact me at school as soon as possible.

We are really looking forward to welcoming all children back on Thursday 3rd September to meet their new teachers and to begin the new academic year altogether. With this in mind, we have highlighted some key information below that is important for parents to know before pupils return on Thursday 3rd September.

#### Bubbles:

We will have our children in two bubbles on site (Nursery, YR and Y1 in the younger bubble and Y2-Y6 in the older bubble). We intend to keep both groups of children completely separate throughout the day, with distinct teaching spaces and outdoor spaces, including on the field.

#### Arriving at school and leaving school:

In common with most primary schools, we will be introducing a staggered start and end to the school day. This should reduce the number of families congregating in the village at key times and support us all to maintain social distances.

**All children in Years 2 - 6 will need to be dropped off at school between the times of 8:30am and 8:40am.** The children will need to be brought to the main school gate where they will then be welcomed by their teacher and line up on the playground in their designated area. The children will then be taken into their classroom by their teacher. **Children will need to be collected between 3:05pm and 3:15pm.** Should you have children on both bubbles, the older children will be able to wait on site for those few minutes until you arrive to pick them up with their younger sibling(s).

**All children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 will need to be brought to school between 8:45am-8:55am.** We recognise that children in these younger year groups may find returning to



school difficult as it is a change and leaving parents. Due to this, we will be allowing parents with children in these year groups to come onto the main play ground with their children for the first few weeks, so that they can help to reassure and settle them before they are led into their classrooms by their teachers. Due to the current situation, we will not be permitting parents to enter classrooms. However, parents of the younger children will be allowed on site (after the older children have left). **The younger children will need to be collected between 3:20pm and 3:30pm please.**

Handover for Nursery children who are being dropped off or collected at lunchtime will be at the main school gate, as we are not able to welcome parents onto the school site during the school day. Please use the intercom system to alert a member of staff to your presence.

As you know we follow government guidance rigorously, and as soon as this advice changes, we will be reintroducing both stay and play sessions and welcoming you all back onto the site. Parent partnership is extremely important to us and we recognise that this will be an important part of our provision moving forwards. Thank you for your understanding and patience in this matter.

**Please can I remind you that the need to socially distance will still be of the utmost importance in September and that keeping a safe distance from other families at the school gate (and on the playground) is paramount.** Please can I also ask that, to minimise potential contact, that only one parent/carer brings the children to and from school. Parents of younger children: if you see another parent entering or leaving the site through our narrow entrance gate, please be aware and ensure that you maintain social distancing.

#### Breakfast Club:

For any children who are attending breakfast club, **this session will begin at 7:30am.** Children can be dropped off at any time after this, up until about 8:15am. The cost is £5 per morning, payable in advance in the usual way (any queries about payment, please contact Mrs Sinton in the office). Please bring the children to the school gate as normal and then alert a member of staff to your arrival by using the intercom buzzer at the gate.

#### Lunches:

If your child orders a school lunch, this will continue as normal; please order any lunches using the usual process. If your child does not wish to order a school lunch then please provide them with a packed lunch. The two bubbles will eat separately from each other and they will not be mixing together in the dining hall. If you have any questions regarding school lunches, please call the school office and speak to Mrs. Sinton.

#### Equipment:

Children will be able to bring to school a coat, bag, fresh water bottle (and lunchbox) to school with them. We would ask that children do not bring their own equipment and stationery with them, as they will be provided with personal equipment in school. If your child has PE, please can they come to school wearing their trainers; they do not need to have a PE kit at this time.

'Find your Wild' After School Club:





We will be speaking to Jo Twelvetrees to discuss our after school offer for next term. As soon as we have further details, we will communicate them to you.

Music Tuition:

We will be speaking with our peripatetic music teachers regarding private guitar, piano and woodwind lessons resuming next term. Again, once details have been finalised, we will communicate them to you.

New Class Names:

I am delighted to be able to share with you the new class names from September. As you are aware, we have been able to return to a four-class structure with our healthy pupil numbers and, to reflect this change, we have decided upon some new class names! The names are as follows:

<p><b>Nursery:</b> Maples</p> 	<p><b>Reception and Year 1:</b> Willows</p> 
<p><b>Year 2/3/4:</b> Cedars</p> 	<p><b>Year 5/6:</b> Oaks</p> 

Pupil Wellbeing:

I am aware that the return to school might feel difficult as the children (and parents) will not have met new members of staff personally before we resume the new academic year, due to the current circumstances surrounding COVID-19. I would like to reassure you that, as a staff, we are working closely together behind the scenes, and that we want to develop close home-school links with you all as soon as we can.



Do help your child to prepare for their return to school by talking to them about what will be the same and what will be different. Do watch the storytime videos with them, look back at the photos of their new teacher and read 'The Bubble Book' once again (which will be updated over the next few days). Before the end of term, we will also post short videos onto Tapestry or Google Classroom, showing the children where to go on their first day back, what to expect and what their classrooms will look like.

If your child is anxious or tearful at drop off, the best approach is often to give them a big hug and to reassure them that they will have a good day. It is usually best to hand them over into our care at that point, and then to leave promptly. We are confident that we will be able to settle them quickly. Please do trust that if there are any concerns during the day, myself or the teacher will contact you.

In terms of provision, we have planned a curriculum offer to ensure that we will be focussing both on academic skills as well as the wellbeing of children. Teachers will be assessing potential gaps in learning (due to partial school closures) and working to make sure that the children have the solid foundation of knowledge to build upon. As a staff, we will work to provide a knowledge-rich curriculum that also places the emotional development and wellbeing of children at the centre. We will be spending the first few days back getting to know each other and building community within school. It will be important for the children to have the opportunity to get to know the new members of the school family and for the staff to get to know the children. It will be equally important for the children to rebuild relationships and friendship and to feel comfortable as part of a new class. We are looking forward to this time and all of the positive relationships that we will be able to build.

#### Final Thoughts:

Finally, I would like to wish you all a really lovely summer. I completely understand that this is a time of change and that many of you will be apprehensive about what September will bring and the new changes happening within Dunsford Community Academy. I would like to reassure you all that myself, new members of the team and existing members of the team have been working closely together over the past few weeks to ensure that we continue to build upon the amazing school that is Dunsford. I will do all that I can to ensure that we strengthen our school community and I will strive to provide the best possible educational experiences for our children. Thank you for your ongoing support and best wishes - they have meant so very much to me at this time of transition.

Yours sincerely,

*Mrs. Guntrip*

Mrs Guntrip  
Head of Academy