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10<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents,

I hope you have all managed to enjoy the lovely weather this week and that you are now back into the swing of a new school year. I just wanted to take this opportunity to welcome you all back to Fir Tree again and to welcome you to Fir Tree if you are joining us. It has been wonderful to see all the children back in school, they have made a tremendous start back to school, once again adapting to changes and routines quickly and with smiles on their faces; they really are a credit to you.



We hope that there will be minimal disruption to this academic year and that your child's education is not disrupted even further. We have plans in place if needs be, I am confident that we will adapt quickly.



We really hope that more than ever you will work with us to support our children this year. They have missed out on so much and we really want to ensure that all they have experienced does not impact them further. Reading with your child regularly, practicing their spellings and mental arithmetic and completing weekly homework is so important and really does make a difference. We are always here to support you too with how to do this. Communications will remain electronic, so please do keep an eye out for those emails and texts! Our fortnightly newsletters will start again from next Friday. We will be keeping the facility for you to contact the class teacher via the school website, if you have any questions or concerns, or alternatively you can always ring or phone the school office and they will pass a message to the class teacher for you.

Self-isolation rules have changed and you may not need to isolate in certain situations. **However, if you/your child have any of the main symptoms of Covid-19 then you must still self-isolate and get a PCR test straight away.** This means that if your child displays symptoms of Covid-19 in school, we will still call you and ask you to take them to undertake a PCR test. If that test is positive then they will be required to continue isolating - if negative then they will be able to return to school when feeling well. If someone you/your child lives with has symptoms of COVID-19, or has tested positive for COVID-19, you will not need to self-isolate only if any of the following apply:



- you're fully vaccinated – this means 14 days have passed since your final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine given by the NHS
- you're under 18 years, 6 months old
- you're taking part or have taken part in a COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you're not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

You or your child may be advised by NHS Test and Trace to undertake a PCR test as a close contact, but you do not need to isolate when meeting the above criteria. This means that, in the above listed circumstances, your child will be expected to be in school.

Miss Blackmon, our new School Crossing Patrol, would like to thank you all for your lovely welcomes and consideration. Please can we support the safe crossing of the children before and after school by making sure that, when they cross, they do not walk behind Miss Blackmon as she cannot see them to ensure their safety. If your child walks to school unsupervised please do speak to them about crossing only at the designated place.



You are able to order your child's school meal in advance through ParentPay, and any meal required for that day must be ordered before 8:00am please. If your child has any dietary requirements please notify the school office.

Parents with children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to free school lunches through the Universal Infant Free School Meal programme. This means you do not need to pay for school lunches, but you must still book them through ParentPay in the usual way.

Some parents have told us that they are being asked for payment for free meals – please do not pay. ParentPay have informed us that you only need to confirm the meal and then clear the basket, and no payment is necessary. If you are having this issue then please let the school office know.

Thank you very much for your support and flexibility with the new systems and school times for drop offs and collections. There will always be initial teething problems but as we all get used to the new one-way system and 'kiss and drop' approach this will get speedier. We wanted to welcome you back into the school grounds after 18 months away, but



at the same time your children have flourished with independence with coming into and leaving school by themselves last year – so we have tried to merge the two. In

addition to this, the ramp from our main gate into school can get congested and can be slippery in the winter months, so we felt a one-way system would be better for all.

You can let your child through the main gates, where I am, from 8:20am and they can make their way to the MUGA themselves with you 'kissing



and dropping them', or you can accompany them to the MUGA where you will be asked to leave them (with the exception of Nursery children who can be accompanied by an adult). Certainly for this term it would be best for Reception and Year 1 parents to accompany their children up to the MUGA to get them used to routines.

Alternatively, classroom doors open at 8:30am and children can go straight in at this time and do not need to go to the MUGA. It is only at home time that you may wait outside your child's classroom door. Please do leave the main pathway free if you are waiting for children - so parents, especially those with pushchairs, can make their way around the outside of the school. Please collect your children in the order of their classrooms along the one-way route. Please let me reiterate how fantastic and supportive you have been with these changes this week!



We do need written permission for children in years 5 and 6 to walk home or meet you across from the gate at home time. Also a gentle reminder that years 5 and 6 should not be bringing phones to school unless completely necessary. However, if they do need to there is form that must be completed. Please contact the school office for this.

We have not set the children any homework this weekend. Weekly homework will be set on a Friday and will be due in the following Wednesday. How to complete this will have been explained to the children in class before they leave.

Thank you as always for your support and understanding - we are looking forward to another fantastic academic year at Fir Tree! Have a wonderful weekend and we will see you Monday.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L Wood".

Mrs L Wood  
**Associate Headteacher**