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September Opening Arrangements

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this letter finds you safe and well? I cannot believe that we are at the end of the school year. The Covid 19 pandemic has not only impacted both our every day and school lives, it has also made our school year speed by more quickly than ever! I would like to thank you all for your continued support and flexibility throughout these strange times. It has been very much appreciated. However, the time has come for us to look towards September and the opening of Magical Meare to all pupils. In drawing up our new plans, we have continued to follow the expectations from the Department for Education but have adapted these slightly in line with Local Authority Guidance. We have put these restrictions in place to ensure that we are continuing to do all we can to keep our children, parents and staff safe. The Senior Leadership Team and School Governors have been working hard to ensure that the Risk Assessments required for the full opening of our school are all in place. Please note that the government is regularly sending out revised guidelines so our plans could be subject to change. We are sad to say school will still not be as we remember before Covid 19. The government guidance states that, where possible, children should be sat in rows. However, please do not worry that this will hinder the opportunity for collaborative learning as we will be utilising the outdoors as much as the weather permits us to. Each class will be provided with outside play equipment and will be assigned a designated area of the playing field to play in. While we will make every effort to include contact games such as football and tag, we must be realistic that they may have to be restricted due to space.

Even though we have put robust safety measures in place, we obviously cannot guarantee that our provisions will stop the spread of Coronavirus. We are all aware of how illnesses can spread within any school setting. Therefore, if your child has an underlying health condition then you may want to consider keeping them at home. Please do not hesitate to contact the school office if you are not sure or would like to discuss specific circumstances in more detail.

Daily Routines

In line with Government Guidelines, from Monday 7th September 'bubbles' are now deemed to be whole class in size. Adults are allowed to enter different classes but will adhere to strict handwashing and social distancing rules. We will also continue to employ a staggered approach to the start and end of the school day, as well as break and lunchtimes. This will ensure that children will only mix with others within their own class, therefore minimising the risk of exposure or



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infection. **Please note that parents with siblings in different classes will follow the families drop off and pick up times.**

The table below outlines the drop off and pick up timings for each class:

Classes	Drop off	Pick up	Entry/Exit Point	Class	Playground
Centaurus & Families	8.30 am	2.50pm	Back Gate	Mrs Noel (Mon-Thurs)/Mrs Fellows (Wed pm, Fri)	Mrs McCabe/Mrs Higgs
Draconis	8.40 am	3.00 pm	Back Gate	Miss Dare	Mrs Burrows/Mrs Higgs
Pegasus	8.30 am	2.50 pm	Front Gate	Mrs Bates	Mrs Hicks/Mrs Kingdon
Pyxis	8.40 am	3.00 pm	Front Gate	Mrs Taylor	Mrs Watts/ Mrs McCabe

It is vital that we keep safe therefore, we kindly ask that you ensure you drop off and collect your child **FOR** the time stated in the table.

There will be yellow painted lines along the back path and at the front of the school to help with social distancing. The teaching team will be in the front and rear playgrounds to support you and your child with drop off and pick up. This is so we can reassure and support you and your child and ensure a smooth-running and safe system.

Please can we ask you to keep your child with you whilst waiting to enter the school. Once your child is with a member of staff, we request that you leave the school site as soon as possible. This should not be used as a time to be sociable as we need you to help us model safe social-distancing practices to our children at all times.

On entry, the children will be asked to sanitise their hands and when in school, the children will be asked to wash their hands regularly.

We ask that the staff carpark **not** be used by parents or carers for either drop-offs or pick-ups. Please can we ask that you **do not** block the gate to the staff car park. If parking out the front of the school, please be respectful of the wider community.

In Summary:

- Children will be placed in their classroom groups and will have staggered start and finish times
- Admission to the school site will be continued to be restricted and controlled which means there will be queues in place. We will be operating a one-way system.
- We regret that there will not be the opportunity to stop and talk to teachers at drop-off and pick-up times. Please contact your child's teacher by emailing the office mail box or using Class Dojo.

Curriculum:

Adjusting to our 'new' school routines may be strange and difficult for some of our children. They have missed their friends, their teachers and the much-needed structures and routines of their daily life pre-Covid19. Our children have been unable to avoid the news with its tragic stories - this will have undoubtedly affected them deeply and in hidden ways. We are also aware that there are children who have flourished while being at home with their families and who may also struggle with

these new routines. Therefore, as well as teaching a wide and varied curriculum, we will be focussing on PSHE through our exciting new Learning Quest: Better Together.

We will be sending home reading books but we ask that you please bear with us as books will have to go into 72hour quarantine after being returned to school. Children are now permitted to use book bags and rucksacks. Every child will be given their own set of equipment that they alone will use.

On Muddy Monday and PE days we are now asking that your child comes to school in their kit. P.E is timetabled for Fridays for Pegasus, Draconis, Centaurus and Wednesdays for Pyxis. During winter months, your child can wear jogging bottoms and sweatshirts over their P.E kit. This is to eliminate the need for changing and the risk of cross contamination.

Lunch Arrangements & Playtimes:

Children are now permitted to use lunch boxes. Please ensure that lunches are packed with easy access foods so there is limited need for support. Obviously for our new Reception, we know that this is a big ask so please do not worry. Help will always be at hand. Initially, there will be no hot meals available. Universal free school meals (all Key stage 1 children) and benefit based free school meals will be provided with a packed lunch. We are hoping that this will only be in the short term and we will quickly return to our usual provision. Children will eat their lunch in their classrooms sat at their desks. The school day has been carefully planned to limit the number of children on the playground or school field at any one time. Different classes will be allocated different areas in which to play and any form of contact play will be gently but firmly discouraged.

Movement in the Building & Bubble Arrangements:

Children will remain in their classes during their time in school and will not visit any other classes. Initially there will be no assemblies or whole school gatherings. Staff are now permitted to move between classes but will take additional precautions with hand washing and social distancing. Cleaning staff will wear PPE. Additionally, non-essential visitors are not permitted on the school site except for contractors who need to do statutory on-site checks and repairs. All parents are advised to contact the school via email or telephone. If anybody does need to visit the school, there is a strict maximum capacity on how many people can be in our entrance lobby. Adults will only be admitted beyond this point if there are exceptional circumstances e.g. to collect an unwell child. At this point, suitable precautions will be taken.

Behaviour:

We will talk to the children daily about our new expectations and school procedures. To ensure children feel safe, we will use stories and talk time so that they can freely discuss concerns and raise questions. We understand that this will be unsettling for some children, but we need to follow strict procedures to enable everyone to stay safe. If any child persistently and deliberately disrespects social distancing measures or new school procedures, then parents will be called to collect their child immediately. We understand that expectations for younger children will be slightly different than for older children. We have included a social story for you to share with your child to help them understand.

Uniform:

In line with Government guidelines, from September, children will be expected to wear their school uniform. We would recommend that children change their clothes as soon as they arrive home from school each day and that these are washed immediately.

General Health & Safety:

In addition to the logistical arrangements outlined above, there are a whole range of other Health and Safety measures we have taken to keep our children and staff safe. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Children will not be allowed to attend school if they, or anybody they have had contact with, has symptoms of Coronavirus. They will be asked to observe a 14 day isolation period.
- If a child or member of staff tests positive for Covid 19 then the whole class will be asked to isolate for 14 days.
- From 1st June, children and families will be able to access tests for Coronavirus if somebody in their bubble has developed symptoms.
- All children and staff will be asked to wash their hands as soon as they enter the building and regularly and routinely throughout the day.
- There will be no assemblies or gatherings.
- Cleaners will continue to follow enhanced cleaning measures. Additionally, on a Friday, cleaning staff will undertake a 'deeper' clean. All staff will support additional cleaning of resources as required.
- We would ask that parents/carers drop off/pick up children on their own wherever possible. This will help us limit the number of adults or additional children on site. If this is not possible, you should speak to a member of staff who will be available to support around the site.
- The number of toys children handle will be limited. Soft furnishing, soft toys and toys difficult to clean will be removed.
- Cleaning staff will use PPE. First aid will be administered with the use of PPE.

Online learning:

The government's expectation is for school to offer a 'blended' curriculum therefore, will be continuing to use Class Dojo for homework and other learning opportunities. We will be asking every parent to sign up at the beginning of the new term.

The Government guidelines strictly state that parents are expected to send their children to school from September. They have also been clear with schools that there will be prosecutions and fines issued if parents or carers choose not to do this. If you need any support or have any questions, then please do not hesitate to get in touch via the school office.

Please know that we have the health and safety of all our Magical Hooman Beans, parents and team at heart and we will continue to ensure that your children enjoy their time with us even with all these new and unusual rules and regulations in place. You cannot suppress the magic at Meare. Have an enjoyable and restful summer.

Kind Regards

Mrs Jan Fellows
Headteacher