

July 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I hope that you are all keeping well and I would like to thank you for your continued support over this academic year and during the past exceptional months. I am delighted to announce that in September, we will be able to welcome back all our children to Darlinghurst due to the government statement:

“Given the improved provision, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in school far outweigh the very low risk from Coronavirus (Covid-19).”

We have been very busy in the last couple of weeks planning, completing revised detailed risk assessments, and working out exactly what the school will look and feel like when your child returns after the summer holiday on Wednesday 2nd September. Please be aware that it will remain a little different to school as we have known it before, whilst we continue to have measures in place.

Darlinghurst Academy has welcomed back children in eligible year groups since early June. We approached this with great caution, reviewing all the scientific and public health advice to ensure that we could be as safe as possible. This has gone extremely well: our safety measures and risk assessments are excellent, and those children who have returned have adapted amazingly well to the new requirements. Safety measures and risk assessments are important – but they would not have been successful if our children hadn't adhered to them.

Below is key information I would like you to be aware of:

1. We have followed government guidance and given consideration of the logistics of our site and access to age appropriate curriculum provision for our cohorts in September. This has led to a combination of class bubbles and year group bubbles. Year group bubbles are in place to deliver effective early years provision, the teaching of phonics and targeted support within the SATs year groups. We have spent considerable time planning and preparing a recovery curriculum to support all children for a positive and supportive start back, with a focus on emotional health and well-being. The curriculum offer for all children will remain broad, balanced and ambitious and will continue to include bespoke programmes for reading, writing and mathematics, alongside a wider curriculum incorporating the arts and sport, following government guidelines.
2. On our return, expectations of daily attendance will be in place. The Government relaxed the rules on attendance during lockdown, however this will change in September. The Government guidance says:

“Missing out on more time in the classroom risks pupils falling further behind. Those with higher overall absence tend to achieve less well in both primary and secondary school. School attendance will therefore be mandatory from the beginning of the autumn term for all children of compulsory school age.” This means from that point, our usual expectations for attendance will apply, with follow up on absence being conducted.

- All children are expected to return to our Academy. Nevertheless, we will need to minimise contact between individuals who are unwell, therefore, you must ensure that if anyone in your household has Covid-19 symptoms, your child does NOT attend school. Any child or staff member who develops symptoms during the academy day will be sent home immediately and should seek to be tested so that the national test and trace system can do its vital job. You must follow the government guidance 'Stay at Home: Guidance for Households with Possible or Confirmed Coronavirus (Covid-19) Infection'. If anyone in your household, or your child, tests positive for Covid-19 you MUST inform Miss Davis – Attendance officer on 01702 509205.
- Whilst we continue to minimise contact between groups of children, we will be following a short staggered entry and exit system for year group or class bubbles. Please see the table below for information for your child's year group:

19/20 Teacher	19/20 Class	20/21 Class	Entrance via	Arrival window opens	Arrival window closes	Depart pm	Exit via
Mrs Dennis	Starfish	Year 1 Albatross	Brook gate	08:45	08:50	15:05	Brook gate
Mrs Dutton	Jellyfish	Year 1 Puffin	Main gate	08:45	08:50	15:05	Main gate
Miss Handley	Seahorse	Year 1 Seagull	Side gate	08:45	08:50	15:05	Side gate

There are a few steps you can take to help us ensure social distancing measures at and around the school gates:

- Be punctual. Please avoid arriving before or after your five minute time slot at the gate. We appreciate how challenging parking can be so please factor this into your timings. Most gates have a different class arriving every five minutes so please also leave the immediate area around the gates as soon as possible.
 - Only one parent or carer to bring a child to the gate wherever possible in order to reduce congestion and the lengths of the queues.
 - Please keep to one side of the pavement to make life as comfortable for our neighbours as possible.
- We have adapted our behaviour policy and guidance to include expectations relating to physical contact and health and hygiene. Children will be expected to wash their hands more regularly and to use hand sanitiser. Our daily timetabling ensures that designated hand hygiene takes place. Children will be provided with personal packs containing equipment for their individual use each day. This will contain basic stationery and support materials. Less frequently used stationery or books will be shared between two children sitting next to each other, in order to limit contamination.

The teaching staff and pastoral team will share bubble expectations with the children, alongside their roles and responsibility to keep themselves and others safe.

Please find attached an amended version of our home school agreement. We ask that you read this with your child and sign in agreement.

6. All children will be expected to wear full school uniform in September. During the pandemic, please select on the website that your uniform be delivered at home, this will ensure less footfall at the Academy. The cost for delivery has been reduced to £2.99. Uniform can be purchased via www.schooluniformdirect.org.uk
** Please note that in the majority of primary schools children and staff will not be wearing face coverings in our academy.*
7. Our school kitchen will re-open in September, and 'grab and go' lunch bags will be provided for September, with the availability of hot meals in October.
8. Extended Care and Extra Curricular activities are not available in September and will be reviewed in October allowing us to implement the safe return of our children. We understand the benefits of these provisions and an update will be provided.

We understand that this may be an anxious time for you and the children after recent months. Please be assured that we continue to take exceptional measures to make our academy safe. We cannot wait to welcome you all back in September.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Nicholls
Principal