



THURLBEAR CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL  
TAUNTON  
SOMERSET  
TA3 5BW

Head Mr Steve Gillan BA(Ed) Hons, NPQH

Tel: 01823 442277  
Fax: 01823 444087

Email: [office@thurlbear.somerset.sch.uk](mailto:office@thurlbear.somerset.sch.uk)  
Website: [www.thurlbearschool.co.uk](http://www.thurlbearschool.co.uk)

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Good afternoon, Thurlbear families!

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, we have the pleasure of welcoming back all of our pupils and, therefore, it is necessary to inform you on our processes to make this as effective and safe as possible.

### **Returning:**

Pupils' mandatory attendance is required as from March 8<sup>th</sup>. The usual rules and duties apply to parents; it is your duty to secure your child's regular attendance at school. If necessary, the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct, lies with the school. If you feel that your child will struggle with a return to school, please engage with us as soon as possible so we can devise a plan to help.

We will continue with our strict measures of social distancing, hygiene, enhanced cleaning and ventilation of rooms, to allow us to minimise risk of transmission around school. **Pupil bubbles will be maintained** for the foreseeable future, as this will maintain a consistent approach across Thurlbear School, as well as making it quicker and easier in the event of a positive case to identify those who may need to self-isolate and to keep that number as small as possible.

Although primary school pupils are not asked to wear face masks, the staff will continue to wear them when travelling between rooms and around the school site. There may be occasions when our staff deem it necessary to wear face masks around the pupils, when it is not possible to maintain social distancing. This will be clearly explained to the class by

the teacher and will not pose any barrier to successful learning or teaching.

The school will revise our risk assessments, again, in line with new guidance.

As before, pupils **must not** come into school if:

- They have one or more COVID-19 symptoms;
- A member of their household (including someone in the support bubble or childcare bubble) has COVID-19 symptoms;
- They are required to quarantine having recently visited countries outside the Common Travel Area;
- They have had a positive test.

Your child should immediately cease to attend and not attend for at least 10 days from the day after:

- The start of symptoms;
- The test date if they did not have any symptoms but have had a positive test (whether this was a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) or Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test).

Should this be the case, contact the school ASAP to arrange for alternative online support to be organised.

### **Around the School:**

The school will continue to follow a strict cleaning and hygiene agenda, which also includes pupil bubbles being assigned their own, specific toilet facilities. Our pupils are excellent at quickly learning which is theirs and why it is important not to use others'.

Seating arrangements in our classes will continue to reflect the latest guidance from the government, and so pupils will still be seated in rows where relevant in classes, as well as utilising any extra space within the classroom (of which there is little at our school!).

Around school, our staggered breaks and lunches will return, to minimise the mixing of class bubbles. This will also include staggered drop offs and

pick-ups for classes. As before, families with siblings need only to drop off at one location. It is important to mention that the school day, although altered at the start and ends, **has not sacrificed learning time**. Due to alterations to lunch, we have not lost any significant lesson times, although there is an expected time impact from the extra washing and drying of hands. For any parent or carer concerned with any loss of learning time, a look at the government guidelines of hours-per-day learning time shows that our pupils will be well-above the minimum requirements.

In classrooms, ventilation is a crucial factor in the deterrent of COVID transmission, and teachers always allow pupils to wear an extra layer when/if necessary as windows are kept open.

During drop off and pick-up, we urge you to stay in your car as much as possible, avoid gathering in groups and stay off the school site as much as possible. This is for the protection of us, you, your children and your loved ones. As always, we are available consistently through our phone to the office and email.

**Here is the drop-off and pick-up timetable. Please read carefully, as we have made changes!** You will see that we have made a slight change in that Key stage 2 have a smaller window for drop-off, as we have found that it is much quicker with our older pupils to get them out of cars and into school. There has **also** been a change in arrival times for KS1 groups. Please ensure you keep on time – neither too early or too late – so we can maintain the efficacy of our bubbles:

Playground entrance	Carpark entrance
<b>Year 1</b> 8.45am + 3pm	<b>Year 6</b> 8.45am + 3pm
<b>Reception</b> 9am + 3.15pm	<b>Year 4</b> 8.55am + 3.10pm
<b>Year 2</b> 9.15am + 3.30pm	<b>Year 3</b> 9.05am + 3.20pm
	<b>Year 5</b> 9.15am + 3.30pm

**Siblings:** We feel that this worked well before, so we will continue the same principle. Drop off at the **earliest** time and pick up at the **latest** time. If you have children who have the **same** times, drop and pick-up will be on the side of the **youngest sibling**. As before, we will all get

accustomed to this very quickly and overcome any little initial confusions!

Currently, we will not be returning to whole school worships, assemblies or Friday celebrations. We will however, on a rota basis after Easter, be delivering a **recorded**, online Friday Celebration for families to watch via Google Classroom. **There will be more details to follow on this.**

**Breakfast Club (from 8am)** and **After School Club** (5pm Mon-Thurs 4:30 Friday to allow a deep clean) is on offer to all pupils, as usual. Please book using the usual online system. After Easter, we will return the After School Club to normal closing hours, subject to national COVID measures being successful.

**We plan to start sport and activity clubs after Easter** which, again, gives us time to monitor the success of the first 4 weeks. Thank you for your patience.

Key Stage 2 pupils (Y3 -6), where possible, should bring their own equipment to school. A pencil, glue stick, pencil crayons and a ruler are ideal starts. Red, green and yellows are of particular importance as this helps with our self-assessments done in class. We will provide a pen where applicable, as we tend to use specific types. Key Stage 1 and Reception Class have their equipment supplied by us.

Any other equipment brought into school should be limited to lunchboxes, PE and outdoor clothing and reading books in a school bag. We are still asking every class to refrain from sending in individual birthday sweets /items from home. Each class teacher will arrange their class system for taking home and returning books, but we will keep this as consistent across the school as possible.

It is back to school, so back to school standards on clothing! Please ensure that headbands / hair bobbles are minimal in style and school shoes are worn. We fully appreciate that feet will have grown! Please just ensure that, if it is a substitute for a school shoe, then it is plain and dark in its look.

### **Lunches:**

In the weeks running up to Easter, we are asking **Key Stage 2 pupils to bring a packed lunch**. This allows us time to organise a plan to offer hot lunches *after* Easter and, with 200+ pupils at Thurlbear, this takes time if we are to do it safely and effectively. Key Stage 1 pupils will still be offered a hot meal option. For eligible Key Stage 2 pupils, a hot lunch will be made available.

### **Communication:**

This has been such a brilliant, successful feature of our lockdown experience. As we move forwards, we are aware that we are still telling adults to stay off the school site and, therefore, the interaction between teacher and parent/carer diminishes. We will be sustaining our presence on Class Dojo and Tapestry, meaning you can still pass on any key messages to teachers. As always, please be very mindful that teachers are teaching throughout the day and not available in their evenings. They maintain a professional presence during their school hours and, should it be important, the quickest route is to ring the office team immediately. Any queries requiring immediate response should *not* be sent through Class Dojo, Tapestry or Facebook.

Finally, your children learning from home will have all produced an immense amount of quality work. You have done an incredible job at posting photos, videos and other communications. Teachers don't need that evidence / collection back in school, so please keep it at home, put it in a cardboard box and drag it out of the attic in 20 years and reminisce fondly on the brilliant home efforts of 2020!

We hope that this helps answer any questions about returning to school. Please don't hesitate to contact us should you have more queries.

We look forward to welcoming you all back March 8<sup>th</sup>!

Very best regards

**Steve Gillan** Ba Ed (Hons) NPQH

Head: Thurlbear CE VA Primary School

*"Train up a child in the way they should go..."* Based on Proverbs 22:6 and our Foundation Stone 1857.