

Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

The Government would like schools to start to consider opening from June 1<sup>st</sup> to EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6 if all five of its expectations are met. We are still awaiting confirmation from the government to confirm that it is safe to open schools. Only once this is received will we confirm a date that we will begin to welcome children back to school. This will also be dependent on staff agreeing to work under the agreed return to school procedures that we put into place.

We have been considering all of the information that has been provided to schools to ascertain how we can offer a safe return to school for our staff and pupils and when this could be put into place. It is unlikely that we will be ready to open to all of these three year groups on June 1<sup>st</sup>, so we will confirm to you our opening date as soon as we know.

Although the guidance states that classes should be limited to 15, we have measured the class spaces and considered the 2 metre guidance and have laid out tables accordingly. We consider that to properly maintain social distancing of 2 metres, in most classes this would only be accommodating between 6-10 pupils. To provide space for 15 pupils would mean that we would not be able to maintain social distancing as set out in the government guidelines. Therefore, we need to ascertain how many pupils we are likely to be expecting to return to school, if we open more widely than for critical keyworker children. An online survey will be sent to you later today for you to complete by Wednesday of this week so that we can finalise our plans.

Attendance at this point is optional and there will be no penalties for parents who decide not to send their children to school. We cannot accept siblings from other year groups.

Our expectation is that there will be a number of children who will remain home, therefore to be able to continue to provide a quality education for all pupils, staff will continue to use the same planning format for all pupils learning for the remainder of the school year.

This means that pupils who remain at home will still be accessing the same learning objectives as those who return to school. For the children who return to school the staff will spend time explaining the new behaviour expectations regarding social distancing and also spend time on supporting pupil wellbeing to reassure those feeling anxious or worried. (See behaviour policy appendix for Covid-19 attached.) The focus for children in school will be on completing the Maths and English tasks from the planning grid that is being sent home. Therefore on the days that children are not in school, parents can focus on completing the other subject work set.

Staff in EYFS, Y1 and Y6 will not be able to continue to give feedback on work completed at home due to the commitment of time they will now need to be in school teaching or provide group zoom sessions.

After liaising with other schools, we are anticipating approximately a 50% uptake on the offer to return to school. If this is the case, our plans will consist of each class being split into 2 groups, Group A and Group B.

This model will enable growth in these groups should parents reconsider at a later date, to send their child to school, if it safe to increase the numbers of the group size. Group A will be allocated Monday and Tuesday each week to attend school and Group B will be allocated Thursday and Friday each week. Wednesday will be used for staff planning and communication where necessary, with pupils who are not attending in either of these groups. Classes, shared areas and equipment will be cleaned on Tuesday evening and Friday evening so that the risk of contamination is reduced as the groups change over. Wednesday and the weekend also enable time for drying and deep cleaning where required. We will only be putting children in their own classrooms with their own staff wherever possible so that they feel safe and secure on their return. However I must make Year 6 parents aware that currently, Mrs Casburn and Mrs Fordham are isolating so are unlikely to be able to return to school in the current climate. Therefore I will be asking other staff to volunteer to 'be the teacher' in these 2 classes, this means that I am dependent on a regular teacher being available to be able to re-open either of these classes if the normal class teacher is unable to return to school.

We already know some of the measures that we would be required to put into place, these include;

- Pupils will remain in their group, or Redwell bubble, at all times, this is so that the children only come into contact with a small group of people every time that they are in school. This means that;
  - There will be staggered break and lunch time so pupils can access outside space with their bubble
  - Pupils will be encouraged to maintain social distancing, however with 4 and 5 year olds this will undoubtedly prove problematic
- Staff / cleaners will have to regularly clean surfaces throughout the day to lower infection risk. To help with this;
  - Children will only be allowed to bring a healthy snack, their lunch and a water bottle to school, their belongings will stay with them all day and children will be encouraged not to touch each other's belongings. Children will not be permitted to bring any other bags or items into school from home

School will look very different from what children are used to (see attached photo at the bottom of the letter as an example);

- EYFS and Year 1;
  - We have to remove any soft furnishing and soft toys, anything that cannot be disinfected cannot be used
  - Children will spend a large portion of their day sat at a table completing work or playing in isolation with equipment that can be cleaned
  - Children will be allocated their own set of equipment to use, e.g. pencil, whiteboard, laptop, they will not be allowed to share or bring in anything from home
  - Children cannot access books from the school library
- Year 6;
  - We have to remove any soft furnishings, anything that cannot be disinfected cannot be used
  - Children will spend a large portion of their day sat at a table completing work
  - Children will be allocated their own set of equipment to use, e.g. pencil, whiteboard, laptop, they will not be allowed to share or bring in anything from home
  - Children cannot access books from the school library

Throughout the day there will be regular opportunities for handwashing and/or using anti-bacterial gel, the least expectations will be;

- On entry to school
- If the person coughs or sneezes
- Before and after eating
- Before and after going outside

- After going to the toilet
- Before leaving school

We would expect all children returning to school to wear school uniform, however we are also aware that some pupils may have grown out of certain items so our expectations will be relaxed during this period, however I would encourage that you try to send your child in uniform or a very close substitute as this will give them a security and sense of belonging and normality being back in the school. The school PE kit uniform would also be acceptable. The government advice is that clothing is washed after every wear on a 60 degree hot wash.

Lunchtimes will be different to what children are used to;

- We are in the process of re-engaging Fresh Start and anticipate that they may be able to offer a packed lunch option for those of you in EYFS and Year 1. The online survey being sent out will ask you to tell us if you want a lunch to be provided, if Fresh Start are able to take their staff off of furlough and this can be organised.
- We are politely requesting that any Year 6 pupils entitled to free school meals, continue to receive the voucher and provide children with their own packed lunch.
- Children will have to remain in their classrooms to eat their lunch with their bubble
- They will be allocated with a 20 minute slot to access the outside space with their bubble during the lunch period
- Teachers will have a lunchbreak and a lunchtime supervisor or teaching assistant will be allocated to the bubble group

Where we need to administer first aid to pupils, staff will be expected to wear PPE which we have yet to source. If a child soils themselves we will be unable to help with personal care, therefore we will have to phone the parent to come and collect the child from school.

If a child or any adult within their bubble shows signs of Covid 19, as per government guidelines, that group will be informed and will be instructed that they will have to self-isolate for 14 days, therefore both A & B groups would close for the 14 day period due to staff not being available.

There will be staggered drop off and collection times for everyone's safety, that parents will have to strictly adhere to;

- Parents will have to keep their child/ren with them until the staff member indicates to send them into the classroom
- Parents WILL NOT be allowed to enter any part of the school building, with the exception of the front office lobby, one at a time
- Parents CANNOT approach to speak to staff at the class doors, any messages must be telephoned through to the school office and will be passed on
- Parents will socially distance from other parents while waiting outside at drop off and collection times for everyone's safety
- Parents will send their child to the teacher and remain at a distance, any anxious children will have to be comforted by parents as staff will not be able to help assist them entering the school
- Parents should not enter site more than 5 minutes before their allocated time slot
- All access gates will be open at 8:45am – 9:40 / 2:45 – 3:40 to allow easier access to the site, then locked for the remainder of the day. Access at any other time will be through the front main gate only.
- Typical times of the day back at school could be;
  - Group 1 - 8:50 drop off / 2:50 collection
  - Group 2 - 9:10 drop off / 3:10 collection

- Group 3 - 9:30 drop off / 3:30 collection
  - Parents will be allocated a group time once plans are confirmed, these are not negotiable and must be adhered to for everyone's safety
  - If you are late for your drop off time, you will not be permitted entry until after 9:45 once the last group has entered the site safely, this will be through the school office, where you will be expected to wait outside of the building, socially distancing, until a staff member signs your child in

Pupil and staff safety is paramount to the phased return of pupils to our school and of course we all miss the children terribly and want school to return to normal as quickly as possible. However, we want to be clear, that this reopening will not be 'normal' and you need to be aware of that. I will not be asking any staff member who does not feel safe with larger groups, to extend the size of their group. Therefore we will be constantly reviewing the situation that we find ourselves in and may make changes accordingly.

I am aware that returning to work is a priority for many of you, I am aware that this will not provide a solution for all of you, but for now, this is what we believe is the safest and right way forward for all children and staff in our school. I hope that you understand our decisions and that you continue to support us in providing an education for all of our children, whether they attend school or not.

Stay safe.

Yours sincerely



Anne Ansell  
Head teacher

