



Friday 29th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope this letter finds you well and that you have managed to have a calm and safe half term. As outlined in last week's letter, our school team have been working to adhere to government and health guidance around the phased reopening of our school. Classrooms have been reorganised so that learning can be supported in smaller groups. Teachers have been busy planning. On our return to school, we want to support the emotional wellbeing of the children as well as start them back into learning. Children and adults, ourselves included, will have a range of emotions and thoughts about coming back into school. Our acknowledgement of this and support for the children is key. Of course there will be plenty that needs to be caught up academically and re-establishing rules and routines and focusing on the emotional and mental wellbeing of the children will be integral to their successful reintegration into school life.

Thank you to everyone who responded to us, letting us know if your children will be returning to school in the phased way we described from **4th June**. Thank you also for your helpful and constructive comments.

Please see the information below, some of which is the same as last week, and some of which has been slightly updated. As always, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the school office if we can be of any assistance.

Phased reopening of schools

As published on the government website on Sunday 24th May, the Prime Minister confirmed that schools, colleges and nurseries are on track to begin a phased reopening.

Guidance has been published by the Department for Education on how schools can open in a way which is safe for children, teachers and parents.

"While we recognise that full social distancing may not be possible, our guidance sets out a range of measures to protect children and staff. This includes:

- *reducing the size of classes and keeping children in small groups without mixing with others*
- *staggered break and lunch times, as well as drop offs and pickups*
- *increasing the frequency of cleaning, reducing the used of shared items and utilising outdoor space*

All children and staff, and their families, will also have access to testing if they display symptoms. This will enable children and staff to get back to school if they test negative, and if they test positive a test and trace approach can be taken.

Children will also be encouraged not to travel on public transport where possible, in line with the advice to the wider population."

We have created a plan to enable our school to reopen from **4th June** to ensure we can keep children and adults as safe as possible, following guidance provided by government. The plan has been informed by the need for good hygiene and for **social distancing as best we can, given the challenge of working with young children**. In their guidance, "Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020," 12 May 2020, the government said:

"We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account. Schools should therefore work through the (following) hierarchy of measures:

- *Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms*
- *Frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices*
- *Regular cleaning of settings*
- *Minimising contact and mixing"*

The plan makes the school look a very different place from what we have been used to, but will become the 'new normal' as we get used to living with the Covid-19 virus around us

Protective measures we are taking in light of coronavirus (COVID-19)

First and foremost, it goes without saying that the safety of your child and of our staff is our top priority. We are working hard, following the latest government guidance, to develop and implement a number of new ways of operating. This will allow us to open as safely as possible, focusing on measures that will help limit the risk of coronavirus transmitting within our setting.

Some of the steps we are taking in readiness for reopening include:

- Asking that anyone who is displaying coronavirus symptoms, or who lives with someone who does, not to attend the setting. That includes children and staff who work here.
- Keeping our children in small groups with as much consistent staffing as possible, and minimising contact with other groups around the setting.
- Cleaning our hands more often than usual. We have developed routines to ensure children understand when and how to wash their hands, making sure they wash them thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensuring our children understand good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and ensuring a good supply of tissues and bins throughout the setting.
- Implementing an enhanced cleaning schedule, ensuring surfaces touched by children and staff are cleaned regularly and throughout the day, including table tops, door handles and play equipment.
- Asking parents and carers to physically distance from each other and from staff when dropping off and collecting their children and to limit drop off and collection to one parent or carer per household.
- Asking children not to bring toys or other items from home to the setting, unless this is essential to their health and wellbeing.

What can parents and carers do to help?

There are a number of things parents and carers can do to help us make these arrangements effective, in addition to the points listed above concerning arrival and departure and not bringing toys to the setting.

- If your child, or someone in your household has coronavirus symptoms, they should not come to school and the school office should be informed immediately.
- If your child develops coronavirus symptoms while at the school, you will need to immediately collect your child.
- For the vast majority of children and young people, coronavirus is a mild illness. Some categories of children with specific serious health conditions should not attend school. If you are unsure whether your child should attend the setting due to a health condition that they or someone they live with has, please contact us so we can discuss the details with you.

Testing

We ask all parents and carers to ensure they organise a test for their child, in the event that they develop coronavirus symptoms, and notify us immediately of a positive test. A positive test will ensure rapid action to protect other children and staff in their setting. A negative test means that parents or carers do not need to self-isolate any longer than is necessary and their children can return to childcare or school.

Return dates

As you know, the year groups will be staggered so that we can gradually and safely familiarise everyone into our new ways of working:

Key worker pupils: Thursday 4th June

Reception: Thursday 4th June

Year 1: Monday 8th June

Year 6: Monday 15th June

School times

To support social distancing, we have also staggered the times of the school day for the different year groups.

	Start	End	Drop off and collection arrangements
Reception	9.00am	3.15pm	These children enter through the school gate and go to the playground. Parents collect these children from the school gate at the end of the day.
Year 1	9.15am	3.30pm	These children enter through the school gate and go to the playground. Parents collect these children from the school gate at the end of the day.
Year 6	9.30am	3.45pm	These children enter through the school gate and go to the playground. Parents collect these children from the school gate at the end of the day.
Childcare Hub for Key Workers (Y2-5)	9.00am	3.30 pm	These children enter through the school gate and go to the playground. Parents collect these children from the school gate at the end of the day.

***On Wednesdays the school will be closed for all pupils**, to allow for staff statutory planning time, a thorough clean and for staff to "check-in" with children who are not attending school.

Drop off and collection arrangements

Morning "drop off" and collection, at allocated time

- Please bring your child to the school gate.
- In the morning and afternoon, Mrs Vagic and another member of staff will be at the gate to collect and dismiss the children.

To support social distancing

- Thank you for your co-operation in supporting social distancing at all times.
- Only one adult per family will be able to drop off and/or collect your child from the school gate.
- Please do not arrive any earlier or later than your allocated time.
- Any messages for the teacher should be sent to our school e-mail address, where it will be passed on.
- The main school office will be closed to visitors, but is contactable by phone/email.
- **Parents will not be able to enter the school building.**

Class organisation (YR, Y1, Y6)

- Classes will be split into groups of up to 10 children, dependent on age and size of rooms.
- We will aim for each group not to integrate with another group throughout the school day.
- Each group will have at least one member of staff allocated to it.
- This may not be your child's usual class teacher. It may be a teacher from another year group. It

could also be a member of support staff leading a group, under the direction of the teacher. This all depends on staff availability.

- Each group will have an allocated classroom in which they will be working throughout; this may not be their usual classroom.
- Once the groups have been established, children will not be able to change group.

Y2, Y3, Y4, Y5

- For these year groups, you are very important and still very much on our minds.
- Learning from home will still continue.
- Teachers will continue to make contact with these children. More information to follow.

Provision for families of critical key workers and children needing additional support

- The children of critical key workers who are in Year 1 and Year 6 will join the rest of their year group and will be in a group with up to 10 children from their class.
- The children of critical key workers who are in Year 2, 3, 4 and 5 will attend the childcare hub in the school.
- The number of groups they form is dependent on the number of children we will have, but there will be up to 10 children in each.
- Each group will be allocated a member of staff and a classroom to use like the other bubbles.
- Drop off and collection will follow the plans stated above for the other year groups.

Playtimes / lunchtimes

- The children will have staggered breaks and lunchtimes.
- Children will only mix within their groups.
- All children will eat their packed lunch in their allocated classroom
- If parents prefer, children can bring in a packed lunch from home.

Curriculum / Learning

- The school curriculum will not resume fully, as learning will be different.
- In Reception, Y1 and Y6 children will be spread out across the classroom, with children seated at an individual seat and table.
- Priorities for learning will include personal, social, emotional and physical wellbeing and revisiting essential learning in reading, writing, maths, speaking and listening.
- Year 6 teaching will focus on readiness for secondary school, including academic readiness and will involve teaching of mathematics and English to make up for any losses to learning incurred while at home.
- Outdoor learning will be encouraged where possible and classrooms will be naturally ventilated at all times.
- Reading books will no longer be coming home.
- No resources are allowed to travel between school and home.

Learning from home

- Learning from home will continue as usual and will reflect what the children are learning at school.

Keeping safe through good hygiene

- Good hygiene practice will be in place: cleaning hands more often than usual; washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap; promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach and frequent cleaning of touched surfaces and resources.
- Each group will be allocated specific toilets to use to minimise contact further as much as possible.
- Daily cleaning will take place *throughout* the school day, with a particularly thorough clean of classrooms, corridors, staircases and toilets.
- Equipment that cannot be easily cleaned will be removed/placed out of bounds, including all soft toys etc.
- All children should wear school uniform. We hope that this will help them to feel that things are starting to return to 'normal'.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- The Government has said that PPE will not be necessary in schools, other than for a very small number of cases (e.g. routine intimate care needs and when supervising a child who becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus).

Frequently Asked Questions

Can my child bring in anything from home to school?

- Children can bring in their own packed lunch if they do not want a school packed lunch. Please leave all other bags, toys, books, etc. at home, including pens, pencils etc, which will be provided by the school.

What will happen if I choose not to send my child to school?

- This decision as to whether you wish your child to return to school, is yours.
- The Government has stated that there will be no penalties for non-attendance at this time.

Is there after school club?

- The government have asked us to stop providing after school clubs for now in order to avoid different groups of pupils mixing with each other.

Can I just pop in to the school office if I have a question or if I want to give school staff a message?

- Parents cannot come in to the school building. The government guidance is very clear about this. Please communicate with us by telephone or e mail the school office to let us know that you would like us to call you.
- In exceptional circumstances, the school office will make an appointment for you to meet the Head of School

If I have a child in two different year groups due to return this term, which drop off and pick up time should I use?

- Please use the earliest drop off and pick up time.

If my child/a family member is considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable, should I still send my child to school?

- The Government advises children who have been classed as *clinically extremely vulnerable** due to pre-existing medical conditions to shield and therefore stay at home. (* or are living with someone who is *extremely clinically vulnerable*).
- Parents of children in the *clinically vulnerable*** category should follow medical advice from their doctor. (** or are living with someone who is *clinically vulnerable*).

What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus?

- If a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. All staff and children in the group will be encouraged to get tested.
- Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to school and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.
- Where the child or staff member test positive, the rest of the group will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Other household members of that group do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they live with subsequently develops symptoms.

When will my child find out which small group they are in? (Reception, Y1 and Y6 only)

- As parents continue to inform us that their children will be attending, we are adjusting the small groups. The groups will be split as equitably as possible, considering the needs of the class
- Children will find out which small group they are in on their return to school.

My child is in Y2/Y3/Y4/Y5. When will they return to school?

- The government has not yet chosen these year groups for a return to school. Once, Reception Year 1 and Year 6 return to school in small groups, all of the classrooms and many of the additional rooms will be in use. There will be no physical room for any more children. It therefore seems unlikely that other year groups will be able to come back to school before the summer holidays, unless the government changes its current guidance.

As some children have been invited back to school and others haven't will it be possible for teachers to stay in contact with the children still at home?

- "Yes! Year teachers will continue to provide support to pupils in years 2-5, in particular by providing resources for home schooling and regular updates on school news. All the staff at our school miss the children very much and are looking forward to a time when we are all together again.

Confirming a place for your child's return

- Please continue to email the school office or telephone us to let us know if you wish your child to return to school in the way described above.
- If you choose not to send your child back initially, but then change your mind, please contact the school office with your request and we will make arrangements for your child to join a group as soon as possible.

Thank you again for all your constructive support through these unexpected and uncertain times. Although we have all been extremely busy these past few weeks, a school is not a school without its children and families and we look forward to welcoming you back when the guidance and advice says it is safe to do so.

Friendship, Trust and Peace.

With warmest wishes to you and your loved ones.

Best wishes

Mrs Vagic

Head of School

Mrs Harris

Executive Headteacher

Mr Con Mossios

Chair of Governors

Rev Andy Buckler

Vice Chair of Governors