



22nd May 2020

Re: Arrangements for gradual, phased school reopening

Dear Parents and Carers

On Monday 11 May, following an address to the nation by the Prime Minister, the Department for Education (DfE) released guidance to schools that states:

“We ... anticipate, with further progress, that we may be able, from the week commencing 1 June 2020 to welcome back more children to early years, school and further education settings. We will only do this provided that the five key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the Roadmap are operating effectively. As a result, we are asking schools, colleges and childcare providers to plan on this basis, ahead of confirmation that these tests are met...”

Their future announcement is provisional and conditional. Subsequently, The DfE has told us:

“Changes will be announced at least 48 hours before coming into effect.”

This would suggest that the government should make this announcement by Friday 29th May. It is only at that point in time that we will be able to confirm whether we may begin a gradual, phased return from June 1st or not.

In the first instance (Phase 1) we are planning for the return of priority children (key worker and vulnerable children). Based on actual attendance of key worker and vulnerable children it is our expectation to then accommodate year 6 (Phase 2) who are not also children of key workers or vulnerable children, when we open to this year group. It will be for parents to decide as to whether you wish for your child/ren in these categories to attend.

The Government’s ambition is for all children to be back to school in July (Phase 3) before the end of the school year, this has high conditionality attached to this ‘ambition’, it remains an ambition and is not a consideration in our current plans. We await further advice on this, as it pertains to Y3 to Y5 and the impact of applying health and safety measures against numbers of children already attending. Our actions will be determined on health and safety, our school risk assessment against Government safety measures and guidelines.

However, to be fully prepared for Phase 1 priority children, planning is well under way and I wish to inform you of the basis of our gradual, phased return and the conditions which will be applied.

The rationale for gradual, phased reopening is based on:

The health and safety of children and staff is of the utmost importance, all adjustments will be made to cater for this in the first instance, backed by risk assessment.

A phased return will be managed with extreme caution and care, so that all necessary protective measures are put in place and this will mean we will be adopting a more gradual approach than the government is suggesting.

Phase 1, June 2nd to June 12th - priority for places will be given to children across all year groups of key workers and those who are vulnerable in the initial two weeks.

Phase 2, June 15th - admittance for Y6 (who are not children of key workers or vulnerable children) to return from week 3. The determination to offer more places will be based on risk assessment, and numbers of staff who are able to attend.

As I am sure you will appreciate this poses a significant challenge, but I wish to be clear that the adjustments we will put in place will aim to:

- Limit the contact between adults and children
- Limit the contact between children and children (not in the same family)
- Comply with the governments guidelines and implement social distancing measures
- Limit adults, other than staff and necessary contractors on site.
- Limit the spread of the virus.

We are in unprecedented times and it will not be a return to school as normal, school will look and be very different. We will be significantly adapting how we utilise our site, there will be many restrictions in place and staff will be deployed differently.

Everything is subject to the Government's conditions being met and their decision prior to June 1st. If your child fulfils the criteria for a place (as has already been issued to you via Survey Monkey on 18th May) **attendance is not mandatory** and the DfE has been clear that parents will not be fined. Parents must make their own choice based on the health and safety of your families.

We are making plans for the following arrangements to be put in place to fulfil our rationale and aims, but please be advised that at this stage some are still subject to change:

Half Term – May 23rd to May 31st

The school will be open as it is currently to provide **childcare** for this week for children of key workers and those who are vulnerable.

Children, parents and staff require a break and therefore we **will not** be providing any schoolwork or projects for home learning, or for those attending school over this period. Staff will be engaged in preparations for school potential reopening.

Anticipated timetable (subject to change) for Phase 1

We anticipate a firm decision by the government within 48 hours of June 1st.

We will inform parents which class number your child and their sibling/s has been assigned to prior to them starting.

June 1st – school is closed to all pupils (including those of key workers and vulnerable children) to train and prepare staff for new health and safety arrangements.

June 2nd – Phase 1 - school is open to Priority 1 children of key workers and vulnerable children across all age groups if parents have specified and registered their request for a place.

June 15th – Phase 2 - possible increased admittance for Y6 children only whose parents wish for them to attend and who are not also in the above criteria, subject to risk assessment.

Phase 3 - We await further guidance to plan for Government's ambition to admit all pupils in July.

Class arrangements

17 rooms (referred to as class numbers) will be used as classrooms to cater for 10 children maximum per class. This number of rooms may be reduced dependent on number of staff available to attend site.

Siblings will be placed in the same class together and classes are likely to be of mixed year groups.

All teachers are teachers of primary aged children and can teach in any year group in the school.

Classes will be led by either a teacher or a learning support assistant (working under the direction of a teacher).

Children may not be placed in a class led by their teacher, or a teacher within their year group

The school will decide in which class children are placed. Once children are placed within a class, they will not be permitted to move classes.

Children will be seated one child per desk, with 2 metre distance from those seated around them.

Children will remain with their class for lessons, play and lunch; they will not be permitted to mingle with children from other classes for any activity.

Drop off and collections (the finer details of staggered timings and drop off/collection points are yet to be confirmed)

The school day, including arrangements for staggered timings, will mean that the timings of the school day will remain as 8.30am when children may start to arrive and 3.20pm when all children will be collected and off site. You will be advised of your staggered start and collection time when this is agreed.

We advise that one adult to drop off and one adult to collect.

Timings for drop off and collection will be staggered. The timings of which will be determined once pupil classes have been set up, this will be communicated to you.

X4 school gates may be opened to alleviate crowding as much as possible. The gate opposite the school office, the gate from the community centre, the gate to the playground and the gate at the bottom of the field near the community centre.

School and parent communication

School reception doors will remain shut and parents and carers will be required to refrain from attending and entering the school building (to comply with our rationale and health and safety measures)

Parents and carers are to communicate with the school via telephone or email, access to the school site/building will not be permitted without prior agreement.

Cleanliness, hygiene and social distancing

Children and adults will be expected to comply with government guidelines on social distancing for all activities including PE, to wash hands frequently and if they choose to, they may wear face masks and other PPE equipment.

We will be operating one-way routes within school buildings and marking corridors and routes accordingly – all adults and children will be expected to adhere to them.

Internal doors will remain open to reduce touch points and extra deep cleaning will be implemented.

Classes will be provided with cleaning equipment, tissues, wipes, sanitiser for adults and children's use.

Children and adults will wash their hands regularly: upon entering school, before and after break and lunch, after going outside and before leaving at the end of the school day.

School Grounds

We will be encouraging lessons and school lunches to take place outdoors as much as possible.

Timings for drop off, collection, play times, lunchtimes are likely to be staggered.

The playground and field will be zoned to cater for individual class zones for lessons, class playtimes and outdoor lunch (weather permitting).

Children will not be permitted to play beyond their class zone and will be expected to socially distance to their best ability within their zone.

There will be signposting on site to provide everyone with details of social distancing measures to follow.

Class and home/remote learning after half term

The government guidance refers to schools using their 'best endeavours' to provide home learning. There is no obligation or statutory duty on schools to continue to provide home learning in any specific way when pupils start to return. We will, however, continue to provide home learning.

The activities provided in school and for home learning will be the same to ensure equity of provision for all children.

PE lessons in school will take place daily and will take place outside as much as possible. Lessons will be adapted to accommodate guidance on social distancing; PE will not involve contact sports and the use of equipment will be very limited.

There will be a focus on PSHE and well-being for the first week back for all children in school (including for children working remotely). This will enable them to reflect upon and understand the past weeks' changes in their lives (positive and negative) and to deal with anxieties.

Learning will be based on key skills in reading, writing, maths, spelling and tables; PE and PSHE will also continue and we will be flexible with introducing other curriculum subjects. Please be advised that we will continually adapt provision and therefore the curriculum offer usually delivered at this time of year will not be applied.

Home learning will be maintained via Seesaw, but as teachers and other adults will be in classrooms with pupils, response times, the type of activities and the level of response will be significantly reduced or adapted.

An adult (teacher or LSA/HLTA from any year group) may be allocated to undertake some response on Seesaw for a year group or class and this adult may change each day.

Children's uniform and equipment

Children will be expected to wear school uniform (to include a sun hat) and school shoes. They are to bring in PE kit, a named water bottle, a packed lunch in a disposable container only. We would encourage you to opt for school packed lunches or school dinners in favour of home packed lunches.

Children will not be permitted to bring in school bags, pencil cases, lunch boxes, toys or games of any kind, home/school communication books, reading records or transport library books to and from school. We will provide all the equipment they need which will remain on their desks for use at school.

School Events

All social gathering events at school **are cancelled** this includes sports day, all clubs and music tuition, Y6 play, trips, extra visitors to school, HSPA events, strawberry tea, whole school assemblies and transition evenings for parents.

We are working on ideas for ways to mark the leaving of our Y6 children differently and Mrs Heaslop has advised Y6 parents of arrangements for Y6 transition.

End of the school year

Note this change: The last day of the school year is changed from 1.20 on Tuesday July 21st to **1.20 on Friday July 17th**.

Please be assured that the children, staff and community health and safety is at the forefront of all considerations and adjustments made. However, whilst all measures will be put in place to support social distancing, we cannot guarantee that children will always be able to apply this.

Some arrangements may still be subject to change and adaptation depending on circumstances at the eventual point of reopening, it is frustrating not to be able to be more definitive with you at this time. However, I do hope that this provides you with an indication of how we intend to proceed and provide for the children, whilst also providing you with additional information you need to support the decisions you make for your child/ren.

As we proceed with our preparations, I shall inform you of any changes as they may arise. In the meantime, enjoy the weather and half term break.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Martin

Headteacher

