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Headteacher: Mrs Terrie Jerrom

20 May 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

PREPARING FOR THE PHASED RE-OPENING OF SCHOOLS

You will be aware the government has asked us to prepare to accept more children back into school after half term, **if the conditions are right for them to do so.**

Over the last week or so, we have been exploring how we can make this happen taking into account the government's guidance on the implementation of protective measures in education and childcare settings. I would like to thank you for responding to our survey, as the results have been very helpful in this process.

The government continues to update its guidance – often daily - and this is making it very difficult to finalise our plans. In addition, the government have consistently said schools will only re-open if it is safe to do so. **We have been told a final decision may not be made until as late as 28th May and it remains possible the government will ask us to open later or not at all.**

The number of children who are likely to return coupled with those already attending means we may have to consider staggering when particular year groups are invited back. The government's guidance is clear, children of critical / key workers and vulnerable children are our main priority, followed by the youngest children – Early Years – then Year 1 and finally, Year 6. **Consequently, it is not yet definite whether more children can go to school from 1st June or all can return on the same day. Please do not send your child to school unless you have heard from us what the specific arrangements will be. Once we have firm plans, we will inform you as soon as possible through GroupCall and via the school website.**

Children will be encouraged to attend school if we re-open after half term, but as it stands, attendance regulations are suspended and this means they are not required to. However, for safeguarding reasons we do have to keep in touch with children who are not in school. We know some parents are yet undecided about whether their child should return or not and we understand and respect your position. **Parents who change their mind must tell us in advance before sending their child into school and a return date has been agreed. This is to ensure we have the appropriate number of staff in school and we are able to maintain appropriate groups sizes.**

I know you will want to know what we intend to do to reduce risks and protect your children while they are in school. We have used the guidance updated on 12th May 2020, "[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\):](#)



[Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)” to inform our practice. Our plans will be updated as and when the guidance changes. Currently, we intend to:

- Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by asking parents not to send poorly children into school and sending children home who do not feel well during the day. Where appropriate, we will ask parents to follow the self- and household-isolation guidance and arrange a test for their child.
- Ask children to wash their hands regularly and at key points during the day. As well as having soap in every classroom, we will also be providing hand sanitizer. Parents are encouraged to send their child with their own supply also.
- Continue to ensure there is enhanced cleaning each evening and additional cleaning throughout the day (e.g. frequently touched surfaces, tables, toilets some resources).
- Organise the children into ‘bubble groups’ of approximately 15 children – they will use the same classroom throughout the week, designated toilets and specific doors / routes to enter and exit the building. They will eat and play together. The purpose of this approach is to minimise contact and mixing of children. We will consider the grouping carefully as we know the children will want to be with at least some of their friends.
- Arrange classrooms to promote social distancing – e.g. one child per desk. The children will have their own set of key equipment (e.g. pencils, pens, ruler etc). Shared resources will only be used by a specific ‘bubble group’ or washed in between.
- Ask parents NOT to send rucksacks or bags into school. PE kits should be sent in on a Monday, taken home, and washed on a Friday. If pencil cases are brought into school, they must remain there. Lunchboxes and water bottles must be taken home and washed every day. Reading books will not be sent home.
- Stagger break times and lunchtimes to reduce the number of children in the corridors, queuing to be served and having too many in the dining room. The children will be able to eat outside, as many of the items on our menu can be ‘grab and go’.
- Promote social distancing before and after school, we will ask only one parent drops off and collects. We will extend the rolling start to 8.40am – 9.00am and there will be a staggered pick-up introduced.

We are fortunate to have been using many of these approaches for the children we have had in school each day since 23rd March, so we are able to draw on our experience. However, we will continue to be guided by the advice published by the government and act accordingly.

Please be aware that for operational reasons we are currently planning to close the school on a Friday afternoon from 12.30pm (after lunch) so teachers can have the Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time to which they are entitled. This will not affect the children of critical / key workers and vulnerable children - in any year group - who will be able to attend all day as now.

We are intending to continue setting work on Google Classroom for all year groups. However, the level of live interaction and feedback is likely to reduce for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 as more children return to school and staff are needed to teach them.

As the school has been open every day since 23rd March, including the Easter break, May half term, planned INSET days and bank holidays, the last day of the Summer Term will be Friday 17th July.

I am sorry I cannot give you information that is more definitive at this stage. It is as frustrating for us as I am sure it is for you! Please be assured, we will be in touch again as soon as we have final confirmation from the government. In the meantime, thank you for your continued support and patience.

Yours faithfully,

T Jerrom

T Jerrom
Headteacher