



# Newsletter

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15<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents,

The Government has asked schools to plan for a potential opening of Year R and Year 1 on the 1<sup>st</sup> June. I have to stress at this point that we are being advised that this is only a plan to open there is no guarantee we will be opening.

We have planned as a school how we will manage this based on the government guidance produced this week. Before I go into details of that however I need to be completely open with you. There are no measures we can practically put in place to maintain social distancing with Year R children and only a limited amount we can do with Year 1 children. If you choose to send your children back to school, you do need to be aware of this.

The second important point is that parents also need to be completely aware that this will not be normal education. We will do our best to keep things normal for the children but with the measures we have to put in place the actual amount of learning they do each day will be limited. Once schools do reopen teachers will not be able to teach in school and produce learning for those children at home, so all home learning lessons for those year groups in school will stop.

Finally, it is your choice as parents at the moment whether you send children in or not. The government has asked us to work on the presumption that all children will be back. I believe that being in school is very good for children and prolonged isolation does have a negative effect on them. What I cannot say is how safe schools are. We have been asked to do a risk assessment but I am not an expert in virus transmission or disease control. We can only go on Government advice and guidelines that state schools are safe spaces for children to be.

What I can say is that we will do everything we can to minimise any risks and keep your children and your families safe. To that end outlined below is a plan of the measures we will put in place.

- Each class will be split into groups of 15. And each of these groups will be taught in a separate classroom. This does mean that your child may not be taught by their class teacher. Class teachers have split the classes as best as they can and there will be no change in how the classes have been split. This does mean that some children may not be with all the friends they want
- There will be no direct communication between class teachers and parents. If you need to inform the teacher of something, please write it down. You can also email me if you need to discuss something
- Parents will be given areas to wait at the start and the end of the school day and will need to send their children into school from those areas. Parents will not be allowed to come to the classroom doors
- Only 1 parent may come up to school (this is a government stipulation)
- Year R will only have outside play on their playground and Year 1 will only play on the main playground and the field

- We will split lunchtime so Year R are eating first and Year 1 afterwards
- Parents will not be allowed inside the school building except to access the school office
- Children will not be sent home with reading books, please use Bug Club
- Children will not be allowed to bring book bags into school
- There will be no school assemblies and no special events or trips
- Children will wash their hands more regularly. There were issues for some children with soap and the amount of handwashing before lockdown. We only have one type of soap in school and we cannot manage 120 children all having their own soap bottles. Parents will not be able to send in soap bottles for their children to use. All children will need to use the school soap

Year 2 children currently coming into school will still be able to. If any Year 2 parents are Key Workers but have not yet sent their children in, they still have the option to do so. We will need to be told beforehand and a letter from your employer stating you are a Key Worker will be needed before any children can start.

All other Year 2 children still at home will continue to have work provided for them by Mrs Hatchett and Mrs Clayden in exactly the same way we do now. If Year 2 children do come back on the 1<sup>st</sup> July date that has been mentioned, I have no idea what that will look like. What I can say is at that point we will not be able to have 15 children per class, even if told to do it. We will not have the available space or the staff to operate 12 classes.

Breakfast and Afterschool club will be open from 7:45am and to 5:30pm. Parents will need to book and pay for these in the normal way.

In order to manage classes of 15 we are using LSAs as well as teachers to lead these new classes. We are very fortunate as a school that a number of our LSAs have been working towards becoming fully qualified teachers for a number of years. These staff will be leading the classes and they are all exceptionally good at what they do. The quality of our staff is one of the strengths of our school.

To turn a 6 class school into an 8 class school I have had to use every member of staff available. We also have four teachers who are currently unable to return to work. This does mean that we have no cover if a member of staff is ill and we may need to close a class at short notice so please have some back up childcare arrangements in place. We have been told to prioritise Year R children so where possible it will be those classes that remain open and Year 1 shut. I am hoping that we can avoid shutting any classes though.

We will be sending a text message out on Monday just to gather some idea of how many parents are thinking of sending their children to school. This is just for our information.

I know this is a very difficult time for everyone and many of you will be wondering what is the best course of action. All I can say is that you decide what is right for your family. We are here as a school to support you in any way that we can.

I hope this has given you some clarity on what we are doing as a school and I hope that it helps you to reach your decision.

Thank you

Matt Greenhalgh  
**Headteacher**