

18th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of our Nursery, Reception and Y1 children,

The government announced last Sunday that as a result of the huge efforts everyone has made to adhere to strict social distancing measures, the transmission rate of Coronavirus has fallen. Consequently, from the week commencing 1st June we will hopefully be welcoming back our Nursery, Reception and Y1 children as they have been identified, by the Department for Education, as priority groups. The government have consulted the latest scientific evidence and have taken the decision to return children to schools gradually, in order to reduce the number of children in a classroom as well as asking schools to put protective measures in place to lessen potential risks.

I understand that many of you may feel a little apprehensive and so the purpose of this letter is to outline some of the protective measures we are currently putting in place and to let you know what a school day may look like for those children returning in June.

Firstly, I feel it is important that I emphasise that the current planning process is constantly evolving, and we are required to respond to daily government policy releases as they happen. Therefore, the details contained within this letter are accurate given the information we currently have.

Year Groups in First Phase of Wider Opening

Three year groups, within mainstream infant schools, have been prioritised to return to school on Tuesday 2nd June. Children in Nursery, Reception and Y1 have been chosen because they are at the beginning of their school career and are beginning to learn essential skills which are fundamental to instilling a life-long love of learning and supporting their social and emotional development.

Risk Assessments

We are currently in the process of conducting risk assessments which will directly address risks associated with Coronavirus, so that sensible measures can be put in place to ensure our school environment is as safe as possible for children and staff. Our risk assessments will be comprehensive and be specific to our school, I feel it is important that you know, we are currently taking advice from both Derbyshire County Council and the Department for Education whilst using risk assessments created for Derbyshire schools.

As our risk assessment will include many protective measures and significant changes in day-to-day school life, it is vital that every member of staff is personally walked through our document and measures are demonstrated. In order to do this, our cluster of schools consulted and the majority decided to retain our planned Inset Day on Monday 1st June, to ensure that every member of our teaching team is confident and able to implement these essential changes. **Therefore, we will welcome back our identified children on Tuesday 2nd June.**

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School Start and Finish Times

The government has asked all schools to reduce “pinch points” (essentially control the number of people who need to gather in communal areas). All cluster schools have acknowledged that the start and finish of the school day are our main concerns and therefore, each class (group) will be allocated a start and finish time and a specific entrance and exit. All cluster schools will also be restricting access to the main school buildings.

Once I have completed our risk assessment, and spoken to staff, we will communicate your child's specific group details to you prior to the children returning on the 2nd June.

Class Sizes and Staffing

Throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, the country has been encouraged to socially distance, in order to prevent the spread of the virus. In order to reduce transmission of the disease in schools when they reopen, the Department for Education has asked us to half class sizes and reduce the contact between children and staff, as far as possible.

This means children will be allocated to a teacher (it is unlikely this will be their usual class teacher) and taught in small groups of up to fifteen. They will spend the day with this group and will not mix with other groups or members of staff at any point including playtimes and dinnertimes.

It is our intention to use our outdoor spaces as much as possible and ensure the curriculum, for this final term, continues to be varied and creative.

Mrs Galley will be teaching the children of Key Worker's in Y1 and Y2.

Protective Measures

We have been advised, by the Department for Education to adopt a number of protective measures, in order to keep our children and staff safe. I have detailed the key points below:

- No one should enter the school if they are displaying any symptoms of Coronavirus
- Your child should be accompanied to school by only one parent or carer
- Children will be allocated a time for drop off and collection, please help us to protect everyone by adhering to these times
- Please do not gather at school entrances and exits (social distancing must be respected)
- All children will be taught in the same small groups at all times of the day, different groups will not mix
- All adults and children will be encouraged to: frequently wash their hands, not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose, use a tissue to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste
- Help will be available for children who have difficulty cleaning hands independently
- All spaces will be well ventilated

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- Breaks will be staggered to ensure routes throughout the school have a limited number of children using them
- Lunch breaks will also be staggered
- Outside spaces will be used as frequently as possible
- Frequently touched surfaces, equipment, door handles and toilets will be cleaned thoroughly each day
- No resources such as school reading books will be sent home
- The number of external visitors will be restricted. If you need to speak to us please contact our school office by telephone and we will call you back as quickly as possible.
- If a child or staff member within a group develops symptoms compatible with Coronavirus, the child will be sent home and advised to be tested. Where a child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their group will self-isolate for 14 days.

Breaktimes and Lunchtimes

Breaktimes will be staggered. Lunchtimes will also be rotated throughout the school and hot lunches will be eaten in classrooms for some children to ensure social distancing.

Transport

In line with government advice, we would encourage our parents and children to walk or cycle to school, where possible, and avoid public transport.

Staff Workload and Wellbeing

Our school has received many messages of support and thanks during this crisis and I'd like you to know that my staff and I are extremely grateful for your assistance and appreciation. There is no doubt in my mind that, throughout this unprecedented time, our school community has remained united and strong and I am certain that we will get through this together.

I know that you all appreciate, I have a responsibility to ensure the teaching team are also protected appropriately and that their wellbeing is considered. Once school reopens for our identified children, on the 2nd June, our teaching team will return to teaching classes on a full time basis and will no longer be setting weekly tasks online and supporting learning at home for Nursery, Reception and Y1.

We have been informed that parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time, however if you choose to keep your child at home, rather than return to school, we cannot provide additional tasks or support your child's learning, as teachers will be teaching their assigned classes. The only exception

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to this is if your child, or someone they live with, has been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to a pre-existing medical condition and has received a shielding letter.

I appreciate this letter contains a substantial amount of information; my intention was to ensure you are in position to make an informed decision, with regard to your child returning to school, and to feel comfortable with the level of detailed planning currently taking place in order to ensure everyone's safety.

Thank you for your continued support, as always I am available to discuss any aspect of school life, please contact me in the usual way.

Stay safe and well.

Kind regards,

Susie Kirby
Headteacher

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