



May 20th 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

As promised, I am now writing to you to give details of our phased return to school for the above year groups.

Can I start by thanking you for your responses to my previous email. There have been many parents saying they intend to send their children in, some who would prefer to keep their children at home at the moment and a few who are undecided. We fully respect whatever your decision is and we will be continuing to support you if you have decided to keep your child at home for now.

For parents and carers who are sending children in the following information will outline the safety measures we are putting in place and give details about the dates and timings of return. ALL decisions have been based on what we can safely and practicably achieve for your children, bearing in mind the necessary social distancing and being mindful of staff well-being and safety too. Although schedules will vary slightly from school to school, most schools will be adopting similar approaches.

Key worker and vulnerable children

Our provision for key worker and vulnerable children remains unchanged. You children can continue to attend school five days a week if needed or part time as needed. If children are in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 they will be integrated into their year group pods.

Timings for phased return

For the next three weeks at least we will be phasing year groups in for **four days a week only**. Apart from key worker and vulnerable children, we will be **closed every Friday**. This is to allow the following to take place:

- A thorough deep clean of all used areas around school and equipment used
- Teachers to have time to plan, prepare and assemble ongoing learning packs for children who are not attending school
- Teachers to continue to make phone contact with families where children are not in school
- Teachers to plan and resource learning for children in school

Monday 1st June

School will be closed for all but essential keyworker children to enable us to make changes to the structure of the school to accommodate children in 'pods' – groups of 10 children who will remain together being taught by a teacher or a team of experienced TAs. I have made the decision to restrict our pods to ten children. This is lower than the government's figure of 15. From a staff perspective, we feel it will be more manageable to keep numbers lower and easier to maintain safe social distancing. Children will have their own desks and equipment and will remain with the same group of children and adults over the coming weeks.

Tuesday 2nd June – Thursday 4th June

All returners from Reception and Year 6 will be welcomed back into school. There will be two reception pods and three year 6 pods including our year 5 key worker children. These three days will enable us to check and refine procedures and systems with groups who are situated at opposite ends of the school.

From Monday 8th June

All returners from Reception, year 1 and year 6 will be in school from Monday to Thursday.

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Each year group will have staggered start and finish times in order to reduce the number of people on school grounds at any one time. Briefly these times are as follows:

	Arrive	End of school day
Reception	9.15	2.30
Year 1	9.00	3.00
Year 6	8.45	3.30

I will email each year group separately about this. We have been strongly advised not to split the school day in half so a shorter day for reception seems sensible. We will lengthen this once we feel children are back into a good routine and are coping well in school.

What School will do

Below is a summary of what you can expect if you send your children back to school. I hope you will know that we will do everything in our power to keep your children safe. We cannot guarantee that they will never touch something another child has touched – no school can do that – but what we do guarantee is that staff will work tirelessly to wipe down equipment and surfaces and create systems which keep children apart as much as is reasonably possible. We will:

- Teach your children in pods of 10, focusing on skills that will enable them to engage with learning and communicate and relate well with each other again. Your child will not necessarily have their normal class teacher.
- Structure school to enable social distancing and avoid mixing of pods, including at playtimes
- Set up lunchtimes so children can eat their lunch together, whilst socially distanced and have time to run around and talk to their friends within their pod
- Enable your children to be in school in an enjoyable, non-stressful environment where safety is insisted upon but never to the extent that children are made to feel anxious
- Continue to provide learning packs for children who are still at home
- Begin to prepare Reception for their transition to year 1
- Deliver structured transition work for year 6 that will begin to prepare them for secondary school
- Send staff and children home immediately if they develop any symptoms of illness. We do have a thermometer at school we will use if we think children may be unwell

What we will NOT do

- Take children's temperature as they come into school. This would cause hold-ups and distress. We will ask parents to check their own children's temperature if they are worried
- Routinely wear masks in class. Staff will only wear masks and other PPE if they are helping children after an accident in order to administer first aid. We understand the value of PPE and have plenty of PPE in school, but consider that wearing it at all times will frighten children and turn school into something so far removed from 'normal' that children would be anxious and distressed

What we ask Parents and Carers to do

I know you understand that everyone has a part to play in keeping children and adults safe. I would ask parents to:

- Not send children to school if they seem unwell, have a temperature, cough or are just generally not themselves
- Only come onto school grounds to drop children. Please do not linger to talk to other parents, even if you are 2 metres apart!
- Remain 2 metres away from any other families at all time
- Contact us by email and telephone rather than coming to the office unless it is an emergency. We need to avoid queues of parents waiting by the office. If you need to talk to myself or Mr Jelf, drop us an email and we will make time to meet with you – outside on the grass as long as the weather remains fine!

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- Only come to the office if you need learning packs for siblings
- Let us know if you feel your child is not coping well and needs some additional support
- Make sure children (and siblings if they have to be brought to drop off or collect children) stay with you at all times and are not running around or playing on the grass
- Make sure children do not bring anything to school apart from a reading book and their packed lunch
- Send children in **non-school uniform**. That way you can ensure they are in clean clothes each day

Lunches

We will be unable to provide hot meals during this period so children will need to bring their own lunch. We will continue the FSM voucher scheme for the time being so FSM children will need to bring a packed lunch too. We can offer a prepared packed lunch for Reception and Year 1 children who are entitled to Universal Free School Meals (this excludes families receiving vouchers for Reception and year 1 children). Mr Jelf will be sending out a questionnaire to ask whether you would like your child to have one of these lunches from the school kitchen.

We have compiled a very detailed risk assessment and this will be published on the school website for you to read. Inevitably, we will need to add to this as time goes by. I will email parents again at the beginning of half term week to let you know which pod your child is in, who will be teaching them, which classroom they will be in and which entrance they will use to come into school.

I do appreciate that there is a lot of information in this letter and I hope I have made it as clear as possible without adding to you understandable anxieties. Do email if you have any further questions or ring the school office and we will do our best to help you. Clearly, these arrangements are made in good faith that the current situation remains the same. They are subject to change, possibly at short notice depending on how things unfold in the next few weeks. Please be patient with us as we finalise details for a return to school which is logistically very challenging but also very exciting and long-awaited.

With my best wishes,

Anne Sargent

Head Teacher