



Dear parents and carers,

Re: Coronavirus Update and extension to schooling over the coming weeks 01.06.20

Following on from my communications with you before half term, I now write to provide further detail regarding the extension of school to increased numbers of children.

As already shared, our reopening plan is as follows. It does rely upon transport arrangements, so these dates are NOT YET confirmed:

- From now until Friday 17th July – School will remain open everyday to the **children of key workers and those vulnerable children with a social worker.**
- Returning pupils will be placed into one of five groups (or bubbles) and will be able to attend school for **two days each week. There will be a lower, middle and upper school bubble.**
- The school day will be **9:30 – 2:30pm** in the first instance.

We will contact parents who have expressed an interest to tell you more details in the next day or two.

Arrangements:

I want to explain to you all that for the foreseeable future, school will not be what it was. Attendance is optional and whilst we recognise the obvious benefits to children returning to school and to an environment where they have been sorely missed, it is a decision that each family must make individually. There will be no penalties for non-attendance at this time and whilst we will implement to the best of our ability the measures detailed below, I **cannot rule out any risk to your child becoming infected or to the infection being brought home in to the household.** The virus remains prevalent and in the absence of a vaccine, the Government are still advising us to 'stay alert, control the virus, save lives'.

Attendance:

Once parents have decided they want their child to attend school, we would expect that they will attend each day as agreed in their 'bubble' group (2 days each week). Any absence should be reported to the office by the usual means (telephone message).

Transport will support social distancing. Inevitably, children will be in different transport 'runs' during this period. I would like to thank Travel Assist, who have been working hard to ensure that pupils are transported in line with social distancing measures.

To reduce the number of people in and around the school community, we are recommending that, if parents transport their children, they are considerate in supporting us in planning for social distancing. Therefore, please limit the number of adults collecting children to one adult only. In addition, please be careful to continue to be socially distanced (2m) whenever on school premises.

Class Structure and Organisation

As recommended in the Government guidance, children will be split into smaller size groups and will remain in these 'bubbles' throughout their day in school. The grouping of children will be decided by the school and will be different to previous class groupings.

Each 'bubble' will have their own allocated staff. In order for us to accommodate the expected number of children set to return, teachers and teaching assistants across the entire school will be allocated a bubble to work with. This does mean that there is a likely chance that your child will not be taught by the same teacher they had before leaving. Once allocated to a bubble, children will remain in that group for the entire day, including break and lunchtimes, and will do so for the duration of the term. Bubbles will be taught in separate classrooms, the likelihood being there will be approximately 4-5 children in each classroom therefore allowing us to operate the recommended social distancing. There will be no mixing of or switching between groups and no larger scale events such as assemblies, sports days or anything of that nature for the foreseeable future (Y6: do not worry – we have a plan for a Y6 Farewell!).

Children will not be experiencing a 'normal' school day. They will enjoy the outdoor environment as much as possible. Movement throughout school will be restricted as part of our endeavours to confine children within their bubbles.

Lunch and Breakfast Provision

We will not be offering 'snack' provision for the foreseeable future, with the exception of free fruit offered to our younger children in the mornings. Children are welcome to bring in an appropriate and healthy snack from home, providing it does not break any of our allergy requirements (no nuts please). Also, we will not be offering any cooked meals as part of our lunch provision, in place there will be lunchtime 'grab bags' consisting of a sandwich or similar and other lunch box fillers. Grab bags will be provided free of charge for those eligible for free school meals or they can be purchased and ordered as per the cost of a school meal. Alternatively, parents can choose to send children into school with their own packed lunches, again on the understanding that they meet our allergy requirements (no nuts). All children will eat their packed lunches in the classroom with their class teacher, before having outside play, within their smaller groups.

Movement in and around school and social distancing

To help our efforts at enforcing social distancing, movement around school will be restricted with corridors marked at two-metre intervals and one-way system in operation wherever possible. Desks in classrooms will be separated as much as space allows and movement within classrooms will be restricted. Each bubble will have separately allocated toilets to reduce the risk of pupils outside bubbles meeting.

As can be reasonably expected, school staff will try to ensure that children follow social distancing practice and will issue frequent reminders concerning this. However, in reality, this is a tall order with young deaf children.

Communication with school staff

Face to face contact with the school office should be minimal and reserved to unavoidable necessity, for example in the exchange of children's medication. Messages should be sent via email or telephone. If parents are transporting their child, messages for staff must be communicated via phone or email in order for staff to be able to focus solely on providing safe drop off and collection procedures for your children.

Uniform and PE wear

Children should attend school in their correct school uniform, including those accessing our key worker provision. However, we strongly advise children wear comfortable shoes, preferably trainers (easy ones for the little ones please!). Children will not need PE kits and will not be changing for any PE lessons or similar as we will be keeping corridors clear and cloakrooms clear to reduce the risk of contamination and to aid cleaning.

It is important that children's clothing is washed everyday, which is part of our hygiene measures. Please help us by sending your child into school with freshly washed clothing each day as this will help protect pupils and staff.

Cleanliness and hygiene

All children and staff will leave the site by 4.00pm to enable our cleaning team to conduct a daily deep clean. More detail is written on our risk assessment. In addition, a cleaning and sanitisation station is being set up in each working space, enabling frequent and periodic cleaning to be undertaken in each room. This will involve the staff working within that area to take responsibility for the cleanliness of their workable environment. For example, frequent disinfecting of door handles and any classroom equipment that has to be shared. Communal areas such as corridors and toilets will also be cleaned throughout the day as well as at the end of each day.

Children will be given frequent reminders concerning handwashing and general increased hygiene. Hand gels, will be accessible in each classroom, along with antibacterial wash in toilets etc.

In accordance with Government guidelines, cleanliness will also be supported by the removal of non-essential items from the classroom. Simply put, the less surfaces there are to be touched by little hands, the less likelihood there is of the infection spreading. This will also mean that we will be placing strict limits on what children bring in to school and we will limit their contact with shared resources. The only items permitted will be a snack and packed lunch if preferred, as is detailed above.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Current Government advice suggests that PPE, and specifically the use of a face mask, is not recommended for use in educational settings. Whilst we will provide face masks, aprons, visors and gloves for school staff when engaged in 'intimate care' or if they need to be close to a child for any reason, we will not provide these for children. Face masks are particularly difficult for our deaf children and staff as it makes communication so very difficult. We are making our own 'deaf friendly' face masks for out of school use. If anyone wants the 'pattern' to make your own, then let us know.

Curriculum and learning

The learning delivered upon return will mirror that being set for children currently as part of our home learning provision. As is the case with the home learning we are issuing, teachers will endeavour to make learning as enjoyable and interesting as possible but please understand, it will not follow the curriculum we were following up to the period when lockdown began. We are hopeful that this will resume in September. Time in school will focus upon basic skills, communication in BSL and English as well as supporting their emotional wellbeing through play and outdoor experiences.

Infection control

Any child showing symptoms of the virus should **not** attend school and should self-isolate, along with family members, as per Governmental guidelines. Please check for each morning before that your child is healthy before sending them in, in order to protect the school community. Additionally, if a child becomes unwell in school, they will be removed from their bubble whilst they await immediate parental collection. If a child, or a member of staff, tests positive for the virus, all other children and adults in that bubble will be sent home and will be required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days. Family members living with them should also follow the same Governmental advice.

The measures that are being detailed in this letter are born from the latest Government advice to schools and childcare settings, a document that can be accessed by the link below.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools> (updated 25 May)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings> (updated 12 May)

Yours sincerely,

Alison Carter

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Head teacher