

Waterhouses CE Primary Academy

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Headteacher: Mr David Wood



20th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I apologise for the fact that this is a long letter. I have tried to include as much detail as possible. As you will be aware, the government has issued guidance on the re opening of schools in England, potentially from June 1st at the earliest. However, the government will be making the final decision on May 28th based on the latest scientific data.

We are aware of the concerns that many of you will have around the government's decision to potentially send some children back to school. We will endeavor to do everything that we can to make the school environment as safe as possible, for your children and our staff. As we are sure you appreciate, we cannot however eliminate all risk.

There are sections of this information that have been extremely challenging to write, as at times, it goes against everything that most of us hold dear, but we have worked hard to balance the emotional wellbeing of the children and our staff with the rigorous safety measures that we need to implement. We have used the government guidance as the basis for our planning, although final decisions have been, and will continue to be made, that are best for our children, staff and wider community.

I know that everyone involved will want to work together to ensure the safest possible situation for everyone. It is our intent over the phased return that the safety measures we put in place will keep everyone physically well, but also the atmosphere we create that keeps children and staff happy and relaxed in order to stay emotionally well.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the staff who have continued to work from home, setting and responding to the home learning, as well as coming in to school on a rota system to look after the children of our Key workers. I also recognize that they have been doing this alongside supporting their own children's home learning and wider family support.

This letter will outline what the phased return to school will look like. Every school will have a different approach, every school will have different sized rooms, corridors, and pinch points, therefore there is no 'one size fits all.'

June 1st; the school will be open for families of **key workers** as per previous weeks.

The teaching staff will be meeting with myself and Mr. Dodson to go through risk assessments, health and safety and what the phased opening will look like.

Tuesday June 2nd; rooms and resources will be finalised.

Wednesday June 3rd; the school will open for **Year 6 pupils** who have stated that they would like to return to school. There will be 1 table and 1 chair per child- they will remain in their places in order to reduce any risk of contact and maintain social distancing. The children and staff will be in a 'Bubble' This will mean that they do not mix with anyone else during the school day.

Wednesday June 3rd; the school will also open for **Reception children** who we have been advised by their parents that they will be returning to school. We will be able to create a 'Bubble' for this small group of children due to the Ladybirds' environment being self-contained. This will mean that they will remain in their class room environment when

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in school. Unfortunately, due to the guidance issued around resources that can be used, much of the equipment that the children are accustomed to playing with and learning from has had to be removed. The environment will therefore be very different to what they had become used to and flourished in. Where possible learning will take place in the outside area, although again, the resources used will be limited. Please ensure your child has a waterproof coat and suitable footwear wet days. Due to the low numbers of children that are likely to return, we feel that we have the space to potentially make social distancing possible. Again, I must stress that the learning environment will be very different and not one that we would want to see last any longer than is deemed absolutely necessary.

If we can see that the above is working, then we will be looking at phasing in the return of **year 1 pupils**. Following this we will then potentially look at phasing in a return of **nursery pupils**. It may well be that this would be on different days to the reception children due to numbers. Again, their learning experience will be far removed from what we are used to.

Pick Ups and Drop offs;

Key Worker pupils will continue with the school day as per previous weeks, coming into school at 9.00am and leaving at 3.30pm. However, parents will now need to park their car on the playground and take their child and collect from the sunshine club door.

Year 6 pupils are to come to school at 9.00am and use the community entrance. A teacher will be there to meet them. The school day for them will finish at 2.00pm for deep cleaning to take place.

Reception children are to come to school at 9.30am and use the gated entrance at the side of the Ladybird's classroom. A teacher will be there to meet them. Parents and carers will not be permitted to go beyond the gate. The school day will finish at 1pm. Parents and carers will collect from the same point. Sadly, we need to be clear that parents will need to work with younger children to be able to make the final steps themselves as staff will not be able to take the children from parents as we sometimes do.

Over the coming weeks, we hope to increase the year groups who are attending. This will involve staggered drop off and pick up times due to the 'pinch points' at our school site.

If you want to speak to a member of staff, we advise that you continue to use Class Dojo/email your query to school so that it can be answered as we cannot facilitate the normal face to face talks at the door.

Further Information

Infection Control and Social Distancing

The guidance is clear that schools are not expected to maintain 2m gaps between people, however we will do our utmost to try to do this where we can, although it could be very challenging at times. We are planning and ensuring that we will provide control by following the government guidance.

-minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend child care settings, schools or colleges.

-cleaning hands more often than usual- wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and let them dry thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.

-ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, kill it' approach.

-cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products such as detergents and bleach.

-minimising contact and mixing by altering as much as possible the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times).

The final point is important, and we are going to do all we can to distance everyone but we have to be clear with everyone that we cannot guarantee a 2m gap at all times.

Here are some further control measures that are part of our risk assessment.

- Any child who displays symptoms will be sent home. If the only symptom displayed has been a cough, we will send the child home and liaise with the parents to see if it persists. If there is a persistent cough or temperature, children will have to be tested and will not be able to return to school until they have been cleared or gone through the subsequent isolation period.
- Parents will be expected to ensure that there is never a time that there will not be an adult available to collect a child within 45 minutes of receiving a call from school. If the child needs to go home because of symptoms, our school will have an area that is not used for anything else where the child will be isolated whilst being supervised by an adult who can maintain at least 2m distance throughout. Weather permitting, this will take place outside.
- If a child fails to follow instructions to maintain social distancing as per the guidelines, the parent will be contacted and will collect their child immediately and then they will be asked to continue their learning at home.
- If there is a confirmed case in school, we will enact policies to test and/ or isolate the rest of the class and all parents informed.
- Children will have to wash their hands regularly (they will be asked to do this upon arrival each day) and will need to bring their own hand cream if this causes skin problems. We expect that this will be at least 5-6 times a day.
- Tissues in individual packs will be available for pupils to help promote catch it, bin it, kill it approach.
- Surfaces will be washed each day and wiped with antibacterial spray at regularly intervals during the day.
- Each classroom will have its own first aid kit to avoid cross contamination between class groups.
- In order to ensure the safety of the school community and maintain the 'bubbles' it is vital that any parents choosing to send their child to school respect all Government guidance and are not mixing with others outside their households beyond the current regulations. If the school has evidence that this is not the case then we reserve the right not to provide places for those children.
- Although we do not expect this to be the case, where children are unable to follow the protocols that are put in place for the safety of everyone we may have to ask parents to keep that child at home.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); The Government recommends that PPE does not have to be worn in school. However, as a school I have advised staff that it is up to them if they wish to wear PPE. If first aid has to be administered, then PPE will be worn. Handwashing though remains a top priority.

Play times and lunchtimes;

These will be staggered to enable children to maintain social distancing and stay in their 'Bubble'. Year 6 pupils will have the separate playground area that runs adjacent to the Waterhouses' playpark. Some equipment will be available for them to play with which will be fully cleaned at the end of the day.

Catering; For meals we are only going to allow for packed lunches for the time being. Infant meals remain free, but juniors will need to pay the normal amount for meals. You are able to bring in your own packed lunch if you would prefer. Please ensure that this is in a disposable bag with your child's name on it. Children will eat their lunches in their class room.

Please also bring your own water bottle and a daily healthy snack.

Curriculum; We will continue to provide the curriculum on line. Children in school will complete this learning and have support where possible. For reception children the learning in school will not be as varied as the home learning activities that have been provided due to the guidelines issued and the limited equipment social distancing. We are aware that children will have their own anxieties and the vastly different environment and practices will be discussed in order for the children to understand that it is being done to keep everyone as safe as possible, and it is not that they have done anything wrong.

Classroom layouts; Space between each desk will be 1.5m – 2m. We will keep internal doors open at all times to avoid the use of handles. When a child has used the toilet then an adult will clean and wipe down the toilet and any touch points afterwards.

Clubs; we will not be offering any Breakfast or after school care until further notice.

Resources; each child will have their own resources they will need for regular tasks. We want to avoid having to clean resources day to day where possible and therefore children have their own things that no one else touches. If you are able to provide your child with their own pencil case (pencil, ruler, crayons, eraser) then please do so.

Uniform and items from home; Children can attend wearing their own clothes. We ask that they are suitable for both indoors and outside. Please ensure your child has a sun hat and sun cream has been applied for times when they will be outside. The government guidance states that you should be washing your clothes each night to ensure that any germs are not carried.

Visitors; we will have no unplanned visitors to the school and the only planned visitors will be for things like essential maintenance.

School office; due to the nature of the school entrance we ask that parents try not to go to the office. If at all possible contact the school via email or phone. If you feel that you have to see Mrs Porteous or Ms Blakemore in person, do not go in to the entrance if someone else is already there.

Leaving the school site; once your child has entered the school please leave the site straight away. We ask that you maintain social distancing from other parents and children at all times.

We hope that this information provides you with a little more clarity. Please rest assured that we all want to return to school, to teach and learn and we are working tirelessly to ensure that everything we do will not jeopardize any safe return in the future.

The information set out in this letter is subject to change, including the potential start dates for some year groups. As schools, we get to hear the government announcements at the same time as you do, and we will respond to any changes in a considered and safe way, letting you know as soon as is possible.

I will be asking your child's class teacher to contact those of you that responded to last week's 'return to school' survey and said they were 'undecided' or 'yes, they would like their child to return', in order to ascertain your final decision.

We would like to thank you for your support since 'lockdown' began. It has been an extremely challenging time for everyone. We will continue to advise as to when other year groups may return to school, what that would look like for them, and on how it may impact on the provision that we are able to provide those year groups that are potentially returning the week of the 1st June.

Kind regards



David Wood
Headteacher