

Dear Families,

I have been talking to several parents about the potential re-opening of school on June 1st for Little Explorers', Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 and think it would be good to share their questions with you. At this moment in time, there is no plan to invite back the Y2-5 pupils but you might be interested to read the practical arrangements for other children and families.

Here goes!

1. Will the timings of the school day be the same?

You will see your child's staggered start and end time in the accompanying letter; that is so each bubble can enter the school safely and so that we can avoid groups of people gathering. Unfortunately, at the moment, I cannot offer before and after school care as this compromises the limited contacts I am trying to maintain for all the children.

2. What precautions will school put in place to support social distancing?

During the first day of welcoming the children back, we will be able to show them what to do and what we expect to happen in terms of moving around school whilst observing social distancing and good hygiene habits.

Physical contact will not be encouraged and if there are medical needs/personal care, then staff will wear PPE. This is going to be the trickiest part of working with our little ones.

3. What will the classroom set up be like?

There will be no more than 15 pupils in a class as per the guidance from the DFE. These groups are referred to as 'bubbles' in the guidance we have received. Each Y1 and Year6 pupil will have their own table. When Reception children and Little Explorers are sat at a table, it will be cleaned before and after use. Classrooms will be set up and arranged in order to observe social distancing rules over this coming half term.

There will be no soft furnishings or equipment available for pupils to use as these will be harder to clean on a daily basis. Pupils will not be allowed to bring soft toys into school. Pupils will not be able to share equipment.

4. Will my child be with their year group?

Little Explorers will be in the Nursery, YR will be in their classroom, the hall and their outdoor space. Year 1 (and some Year 2s of key workers/vulnerable children) will be allocated either the Year 1 room or the Year 2 room and Year 6 will be in the Year5/6 classrooms. Key worker children and vulnerable pupils will be in the Y3/4 room. The children will not need to go between these rooms.

5. What do you envisage a child's classroom experience be like during COVID19?

We will tailor any group work to address any anxieties that our pupils may have developed. Social distancing will be adhered to but the government have admitted that this will not be

possible at all times with younger pupils. Most pupils will have to be at their desks for much of the school day.

6. Will there be any break times or will it be so strict that pupils have to stay in one spot all day?

Each group will be called a 'bubble'. Break times will still be in place but staggered so that groups, or bubbles, do not mix with other groups/bubbles and in this way we can reduce the risk of spreading any infection.

Pupils will be shown games that they can play safely whilst observing social distancing rules. Again, the government have said that social distancing will be difficult for younger pupils in school.

7. Would there be an opportunity for pupils to go outside at lunchtime?

Lunches will be eaten in your child's designated learning area. Lunch time staff will be with each group. There will be 30 minutes of outside time and this will be staggered so that only one bubble of children is on the playground/MUGA at a time.

8. How will toilet breaks be managed?

Pupils will be shown how to manage social distancing during toilet breaks. Only 2 pupils to access these at a time. No one will be restricted from going to the toilet and pupils will be constantly reminded about the importance of hand washing. Mrs Seymour will always be on hand throughout the day to clean the toilets after use.

9. Would pupils still get PE sessions, although we know they will be very different?

Outside activities will be carefully planned. Guidelines say that equipment can't be shared and neither can pupils play team games or activities that don't adhere to social distancing. So yes, pupils will be outside but not necessarily exercising together in a way that existed before lockdown.

10. My child is feeling anxious about returning to school. What can we do to help?

Share all this information with your child, talk to your class teacher on Class Dojo, give us a ring/email so that we can answer any personal questions to help prepare everyone for a new type of schooling.

There will also be activities planned to support emotional well-being and these will be tailored to suit the children's needs during the school day. I have added some transition and mental health resources to the bottom of this letter.

11. Will my child be comforted if they are upset?

We will find different ways to comfort an upset child in line with the guidance from the DFE. No one will leave a child upset, we just couldn't do that. First aid will be administered from an adult in your child's bubble.

12. I am worried about my child and family catching this virus. Do I have to send my child back to school?

It is your choice whether you send your child back to school during this time. You have to assess where your child would be safest. There are no penalties or unauthorised absences if you do choose to keep your child at home during this pandemic.

13. Can I change my mind at a later date about sending my child back to school?

Yes, you can decide to bring your child to school at a later date.

We would ask that you contact us if you do change your mind so that we may make the necessary arrangements. You could decide to withdraw your child but please bear in mind that this may be confusing for your child depending upon their age. Your child should attend school for their usual hours or not at all.

14. If my child doesn't go back to school, will there still be home learning for those who aren't in school?

All staff who are able to come into school will be expected to do so from 1st June 2020. Teachers will be first and foremost engaging with the pupils in their care. We will continue to use the online learning platforms that we have been doing already and we will adjust work expectations accordingly. Home learning will not be monitored as closely and it will take longer to receive a response from us regarding home learning. You must do what you feel is right for your children and we will always support you in any way that we can.

15. What will happen if there is a COVID19 case in school?

In the event of a person in school displaying symptoms of the virus, their first duty is to tell someone. We will remove the person, adult or child, from the group as soon as is possible and take them to a designated space away from everyone else. Parents will be informed and a test booked for the person/family concerned. The person will be sent home as soon as possible. If the test is positive, every person in that bubble from school will need to self-isolate at home with the rest of their household and will not be able to return to school until the quarantine period is over. If the test is negative, the person may return to school.

Please note that currently tests are taking about five days to come back with a result and that person should not come back to school until their results are returned to them.

16. Meals

We are still providing hot school meals for pupils in school. There might be revised menu choices and more information will follow. We ask that all pupils in KS1 take up their free school meal offer so that extra baggage does not come in from home.

We would ask that all pupils take up a school meal instead of bringing food from home.

Free School Meal children who are at home will still receive food vouchers.

17. Will their classroom be deep cleaned before the school commences and then will it be cleaned every break throughout the day?

In short, yes. We have already organised for extra cleaning and “fogging” of all rooms. Everyone entering school will be expected to clean their hands without exception. Pupils will be expected to wear clean clothes every day. Hopefully the weather will be kind and

reduce the need for coats. Pupils must wear their own appropriate, modest clothing and sensible footwear.

18. Would the children be able to wear some sort of face protection or PPE?

The Government have said that PPE is not required in schools unless staff are dealing with a pupil that is showing signs of having the virus. So no, pupils would not be wearing PPE.

19. My child has an EHCP/SEND and I don't know how being back in school will affect my child.

If your child has an EHCP or Special Educational Needs, please contact Mrs Belton, SENDCo to discuss any concerns you may have.

20. Will the school open to other year groups before the end of term?

Since each classroom is being used for YR, Y1, Y6 and key worker children, the school will be very full. At this moment in time, we will only be opening for the year groups and key worker pupils as specified by the Government.

21. How should we continue to contact school during COVID19?

We strongly advise that no one comes to the school office. If you need to contact us then please do so by email, ClassDojo or by telephone.

Mental well-being links

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-your-child-is-anxious-about-going-back-to-school/>

<https://rockitmama.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/How-to-Foster-Your-Childs-1-1-683x1024.png>

Transition links

<https://www.abc.net.au/life/helping-kids-with-the-transition-back-to-school/12247052>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-your-child-is-anxious-about-going-back-to-school/>

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further queries.

Stay safe, stay well and stay happy. These are difficult times ahead but we will endeavour to do the very best for you and your family.