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Wednesday 20th May

Dear Parents and Carers

Update on Wider Re-Opening of our School

I hope you are all keeping well, are staying safe and making the best of the current situation. The staff are really looking forward to seeing the children when they are able to return. We have missed them all.

I apologise for writing to you at length, but I would rather provide you with as much information as possible following the Government's announcement last week of its plan to begin the phased re-opening of schools from – at the earliest – 1st June. I would suggest putting the kettle on, sitting down with a cup of tea (or whatever?), and try to find some space and time to digest everything in this letter.

I also apologise for the length of time it has taken for me to write to you since the Prime Minister made his announcement on the evening of 10th May. We found out the government plan at exactly the same time as you, and more details have been drip feeding into school throughout last week from both the government and the Local Authority on how and what they believe schools should do to enable re-opening, keeping children staff and families safe. You will I am sure appreciate that there has been a huge amount for us to consider.

As you will have heard, the Government's plan is for primary schools to re-open from 1st June only for children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 classes, year groups they have identified as a priority. They have said that their plan is for the children from the other year groups (Years 2 – 5) to return to school at a later date before the end of the summer term.

The purpose of this letter is:

- 1) To give you information on what our preliminary plans are for our school in terms of re-opening
- 2) To ask parents/carers of children only in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 classes, on the basis of our plans, to give us a preliminary indication of whether they intend for their child to return to school.
Knowing the potential numbers of children returning will help us to plan more effectively or adapt our proposed plans if necessary.
How you can give your indication is explained at the end of the letter.

Please be assured that it is our first and foremost priority to keep the children, their families and staff at school as safe as possible. Our proposed plans or models for children to return take into consideration DfE and local authority guidance, and are in line with the best advice available for ensuring the optimum safety in our school, in the current situation. If this situation changes, we will of course review and revise our plans. The plans outlined below are still subject to approval by the Full Governing Body which is meeting tomorrow evening. The Governors have received a thorough and detailed report on this.

Our key considerations are as follows:

- What is the best way to minimise the risk of transmitting the virus on the school site?
- What is the best way to keep children and adults as safe as possible?
- How do we best support children's mental health and emotional wellbeing on their return to school?

Our Proposed Plans for Return

- Monday 1st June is a scheduled INSET day for staff and School will be closed to all children. There will be no provision for key worker children. This day will be vital for staff to prepare the school for the proposed return of the Year groups identified.



- The government prioritised Year groups (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 classes) will not be returning this week. Our plans consider the earliest starting point for one or two of these Year groups from Monday 8th June. You will appreciate there remains a considerable amount of work for us at School to undertake to make changes to the classroom environments in readiness for return. We are still considering how best to ‘phase’ in each Year group, with the other Year groups starting 15th June, possibly 22nd June. It is important to remember that the Government has only set out its ‘intention’ and has not yet confirmed whether schools will return from 1st June. If the Government do confirm re-opening of schools we will be able to inform you of a clear timeframe for which and when each Year group start in a letter sent by end of Monday 1st June at the latest.
- Provision for key worker and vulnerable children will continue daily from Tuesday 2nd June.
- The Breakfast Club and After School Club provision will not be available for the whole of the remaining Summer term. It has been necessary to ‘furlough’ the staff employed in these roles.
- Please bear in mind that the following arrangements are based on the individual situation at Bounds Green with regard to school buildings, layout and staffing. The advice from government and Haringey is clear that schools should organise re-opening based on their own specific context and it is important to understand that other schools may make different arrangements.
- The proposed Bounds Green plan/model for Reception, Year 1 & Year 6 classes when they return is similar and follows some key principles and guidance. Each class will be split into two halves of 15, creating separate ‘pods’ or ‘social bubbles’. The government thinking behind this is to limit children’s contact with other children to minimise risk of possible transmission as well as better enabling social distancing.
- The proposal/model (to be approved by the full governing body tomorrow evening) is for children in Reception, Year 1 & Year 6 classes to attend school on a part-time basis; either on Monday and Tuesday, or Thursday and Friday. This is to enable us to provide consistent adult support for each pod, which we think is vitally important to provide stability for the children. We think it is very important for all of the children to have the opportunity to see their own class teacher and TA (where available).
If you consider each class being split into 2 ‘pods’ or ‘social bubbles’ of maximum 15 with the names A and B, the weekly timetable would look like this:

	Am: Class Groups in	Pm: Class Groups in
Monday	A	A
Tuesday	A	A
Wednesday	Closed	Closed
Thursday	B	B
Friday	B	B

- As you can see each child would attend for 2 whole days per week. The School closure on Wednesday allows for statutory Teacher Planning, Preparation & Assessment time, time to support continuing Home Learning and importantly allows for a thorough and deeper clean in between group A and group B.
- For Reception there will need to be changes to the layout of the environment as ‘Free Flow’ by the children will not be possible under the guidance. This will mean that partition doors between each space will need to be ‘closed’ to maintain each group’s ‘social bubble’. Each class group will need to have timetabled slots to use the shared room, the outside Reception area, even use of Reception shared resources such as big block play to ensure that these resources can be appropriately cleaned between uses.
- The provisional plans for Nursery are slightly different considering the different layout of the Nursery environment and the younger age of the children. These plans have been agreed with Katy (our Nursery Teacher) and have the approval of Haringey’s Lead Adviser for Early Years.
- In our Nursery we have 30 full-time (30 hour) children and 30 part-time (15 hour) children. As per Reception, Year 1 & 6 the model outlined below is also a part-time offer. The model proposed for nursery does not allow for paid extended day provision for 15 hour children.
- In the model below the 30 hour children will be split into 2 groups of 15 (Groups A & B), whilst all the 15 hour children, regardless of when they usually attend, will also be split into 2 groups of 15 (Groups C & D). You will see below in the table that this means the 2 groups of 30 hour children will attend either all day Monday & Tuesday or all day Thursday and Friday, as per Reception, Year 1 & Year 6. The 2 groups of 15 hour children will attend either Monday & Tuesday mornings or Thursday & Friday mornings.

	Am: Class Groups in	Pm: Class Groups in
Monday	A & C	A
Tuesday	A & C	A
Wednesday	Closed	Closed
Thursday	B & D	B
Friday	B & D	B

- The Government have announced that, in the current circumstances, they do not intend to hold parents/carers to account for the non-attendance of their children of statutory school age. It is wholly understandable that some of you will have anxieties about your child returning. It is our duty at school to comply with the guidance we have been provided to ensure it is as safe as possible for your child and staff to return. Whilst it is up to schools to decide what is safe and manageable, following this guidance, it is ultimately up to you to decide whether to send your child to school.

- Provisional, early feedback from other schools suggests that less than 50% of parents at the present moment are willing for their child to start back at school.

There remains still a great deal to inform you about in terms of the measures the School will need to put in place to ensure safety, and some aspects that need to be considered by staff at School to meet all aspects of the thorough Risk Assessment that will be required to enable safe re-opening. I will be writing a further letter to parents/carers of Nursery, Reception, Year 1 & Year 6 to go out by end of Monday 1st June latest detailing these.

Some advance notice of some of these aspects I include below, hopefully so you can be reassured that we have the safety of our community firmly in mind and our attention to every detail:

- What will the curriculum look like for children returning to school? We are considering this carefully with a strong focus on the children's social and emotional health & well-being
- Staggered start and end times for the Key Year groups, as well as key worker children groups, to ensure social distancing. Some year groups may start at 9am, other later perhaps 9.30am, different Year group end times from 2.30pm through to 3.30pm
- Signage / markings to ensure social distancing
- One way corridor and entry/exit systems for the children
- Direction to only use a particular gate for entry / exit to ensure social distancing
- Limiting use of resources, and keeping these regularly cleaned.
- Removal of soft furnishings within Early Years
- Staggered play times so that different groups do not interact with each other
- Lunches and how this is delivered and managed. This is under careful consideration but it is possible that children will need to eat a packed lunch in their classroom / space (or outside possibly)
- Routines for regular handwashing & hygiene
- Likely limitations on parents entering school buildings or classrooms to ensure social distancing

This list is not exhaustive, just some of the aspects that we will be communicating to parents/carers in due course, and in clear detail, by end of Monday 1st June.

We'd like to thank you for spending your time reading this rather long and informative letter. We hope that we have reassured you that every aspect of re-opening of our school has been carefully considered and will be under continuous review. Whilst we continue to carry out all the safety checks and risk assessments, we'd like you to stay safe, stay strong and continue to look after each other, looking forward to seeing you soon,

With best wishes for now,

Will and Helen