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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL
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Monday 8th June 2020

Letter for parents/carers of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 and key worker parents, regarding wider school reopening from 15th June

Dear Parents/Carers

Following a period of careful planning we are now able to share details of our plans when our school reopens to more children from 15th June. Parents should be aware that these plans may be subject to change at short notice as further guidance becomes available from the Government and Local Authority. Similarly, the availability of staffing may be affected by the current pandemic, which could cause a disruption to the delivery of these plans. I hope this isn't the case and that we can go ahead from 15th but, as the safety of pupils, staff and families remains paramount, we have to be responsive to any new information we receive that might put this at risk.

I apologise for the length of this letter but there are many details that need to be shared.

Please note that the school will close early, after lunchtime on a Wednesday for all but the children of key workers. This is to allow for a substantial clean to take place mid-week and for teachers to have PPA time (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) so they can plan and monitor ongoing learning at home and in school.

Who will be teaching my child and where will they be based?

Key worker children will be absorbed into their class groupings if in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

	Classroom	Staff
Reception Group/Bubble	Willow/Reception Classroom	Miss Bradley (Monday to Wednesday) Mr Underwood (Thursday, Friday) Miss Dunn (full time)
Year 1 Group/Bubble	Horse Chestnut/Year 1 Classroom	Mrs Dean (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning) Miss Richardson (Wednesday afternoon – Year 1 key worker children only, Thursday and Friday) Miss Craven (full time)
Year 6 Group/Bubble	Hawthorn/Year 6 Classroom	Miss Peel and Mrs Wellstood
Key Worker Group/Bubble (Key Worker children who are in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5)	Silver Birch/Year 4 Classroom	Mrs Vest (Monday and Tuesday) Mrs Marambe (Wednesday to Friday) Miss Richmond (full time)

The maximum group size will be 15 children although most will be 10 or less, due to classroom sizes. Groups/bubbles will be based in one classroom, in which they will undertake all activities and will not mix with any other children within the school. Weather permitting, they will have one teaching session a day outside in a clearly defined area. Playtimes will be staggered, with groups playing in separate zones

Where and when do I drop my child off and collect them?

Only staff and children will be allowed into the school building. Only one adult should arrive with their child please. We would encourage Year 6 children to walk in and out of the school grounds themselves, whenever possible. ***We are staggering strict timings for drop off and pick up – please make sure you stick to these so we can ensure as much social distancing as possible takes place.***

We cannot facilitate split sessions or half days and pupils should attend for the whole day.

If you are a key worker and have children in two different bubbles, for example Year 1 and Year 5, you can drop them off at the earliest time of 8.45 and pick them up at the latest time of 3.15. They still need to go to their separate entrances – we suggest you take and collect your youngest child first as you can explain to your eldest child that you might be a little late coming to get them. Staff will be aware of this.

	Entrance to be used	Drop off time	Pick up time
Reception Bubble	Entrance by the side of the Village Hall (we'll call it their new secret entrance!) Signs will be in place and staff will be there to guide you, on the first day back. Staff will come and meet children at the gate.	8.55	3.05 (1.00 on Wednesdays, unless a key worker child)
Year 1 Bubble	Main school entrance Please wait outside rather than coming into the main reception area.	8.55	3.05 (1.00 on Wednesdays unless, a key worker child)
Year 6 Bubble	Hawthorn Class door	8.45	3.15 (1.10 on Wednesdays, unless a key worker child)
Key Worker Bubble (in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5)	Silver Birch Class door (accessed from the playground)	8.45	3.15

When dropping off and collecting, we ask you to be considerate of others and to follow social distancing. There will be some signs to remind you of this, however we can't put signs and markings everywhere so please take personal responsibility for this, for you and your child. Please leave the school site as soon as you have left your child in the care of a member of staff.

We will operate a ***one way system*** on our school grounds (there will be signs and markings to guide you). If you are bringing a child into school, please walk down the pedestrian path. When you are walking back out of school grounds, please walk down the drive to the large gate. The gates will be partially closed so no vehicles should be moving at this time, however we advise you to hold your child's hand/keep them near you, as a precaution. We usually walking along the drive but need to have this in place at the moment, so we don't have people travelling in two directions along the narrow pedestrian path we have.

Any communication with the school must be by either telephone or email. If the phone isn't answered, you can leave a message and we will ring you back as soon as we can. Unfortunately, teachers will be unable to take messages at drop off and collection times and parents/carers must not call into the school office to leave messages.

What does my child need to wear to school?

Children do not need to wear school uniform. We ask that they wear comfortable clothes, eg jogging bottoms, leggings, shorts and footwear that will be suitable for any sporting or active sessions they may take part in (children will not be getting changed for PE so do not need a kit in school). Children must wear clean clothes every day please. If your child cannot tie shoelaces independently, they shouldn't wear trainers/footwear with laces.

What does my child need to bring with them to school?

Your child can only bring a coat, packed lunch (if they need it) and a water bottle (marked clearly with their name). These must be washed thoroughly at home every night. Children must not bring any bags and reading books and reading records will not be going back and home between school. Children should wear sun cream (applied at home please) and bring a hat, if the weather is sunny.

What are arrangements for lunches?

The school kitchen will provide packed lunches for all children who usually have a school dinner. If children are bringing packed lunches from home, it is helpful if they can be in bags that can be disposed of, after eating, rather than packed lunch boxes that go to and from school. Also, please bear in mind that packed lunch items should be things that children can open themselves, to minimise staff having to handle a range of food items.

Lunchtimes will be staggered across school and children will eat in their classrooms.

What are arrangements for playtimes/outside time?

Children will go outside to play within their bubble in separate demarcated zones. The use of large, fixed play equipment will not be allowed as we do not have the capacity to clean this regularly, on top of all the additional cleaning that has to take place in school. Each bubble will have smaller equipment to play with, that they can share, eg hoops, skipping ropes.

What is the school doing to ensure infection protection and control/minimise the risk of infection?

- ***Any child with symptoms of COVID-19, or living with someone who is displaying symptoms of the virus, must not attend school. This is also the same for staff.***
- Extra soap and hand sanitiser have been ordered in preparation for the re-opening of the school. Children will wash their hands, in accordance with Government guidance, on entry into school. This routine will be repeated when the children return from morning and afternoon break, before they eat their lunch, on return to the classroom after their lunch break and before they leave school.
- The Government protocol of 'catch it, bin it, kill it' will be followed rigorously and hands washed after any coughs and sneezes. We have new lidded bins in school to ensure any germs are contained. We will have tissues in school but it would also be helpful if you could send your child into school with a packet of tissues.
- We recommend that children also wash their hands thoroughly when they get home and change their clothes.
- Frequently touched surfaces around the school, e.g. door handles, taps, desks will be cleaned frequently throughout the day. Working hours of our caretaker and cleaner have been amended and increased to support with this.
- Where necessary, markings will be placed around school to assist with social distancing at pinch points.
- The day will be arranged to ensure minimal movement throughout school, during the day.
- Furniture will be rearranged to help promote social distancing. Soft furnishings, such as cushions, will be removed and the range of toys available to younger children will be reduced (there will still be enough for them to have fun though!)
- Windows will be kept open as much as possible to ensure maximum ventilation and, when feasible, internal and external doors will too.
- PPE equipment will be available for staff use in certain circumstances e.g. administering first aid, providing intimate care or caring for a child who is unwell or who develops virus symptoms.

- If a child presents with symptoms of Covid-19, they will be isolated (we have a room ready for this) and parents will be contacted to come and collect them immediately. A staff member would be with them at all times. Testing will be available to children displaying symptoms and their families. Please get in touch with school if this is the case. If a staff member presents with symptoms of COVID-19, they will go home or be driven home immediately. In the event of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, we will take guidance from Public Health England and act accordingly.

What will curriculum coverage be like in school?

The National Curriculum remains suspended. However, wherever possible we will be following as much of our usual curriculum, with adaptations appropriate to the length of time school has been closed. Teachers will be planning the same activities for home learning and for learning in school although some tweaks will be needed in school for the main key worker group, as this ranges from Year 2 to Year 5 pupils. Staff will use their professional judgement to balance learning and wellbeing; this is especially important when children first return to school and given the unusual time we have all been living through recently.

What if my child needs any medication to be administered during their time at school?

If your child requires any form of medication (other than children on medical plans with inhalers already in school) please contact the school office, via phone or email. We can discuss whether we can accommodate this and, if we can, will make arrangements for the hand over of medicines and to complete necessary documentation.

What can I do to support and prepare my child for their return to school?

- As with anything, present it in a positive, reassuring way (even if you are feeling a little anxious yourself). Remind them how exciting it will be to be back in school and to see some of their friends! Also, remind them how much staff are looking forward to seeing them! It is natural that children will be a little anxious after such a length of time away from school. Please be reassured we will do all we can to help them settle in again.
- Speak to your child about things they might have to do at school, eg wash their hands, and how school might look a little different. We will be adding some resources to our school Facebook Page tomorrow (Tuesday 9th June) to support with this, for example photos and videos of the way school will look and a story about social distancing/bubbles.

I wish to thank staff for all their efforts to get everything ready for wider reopening from 15th June, and to governors for supporting with difficult decisions surrounding this. As I am sure you can imagine, a lot of work has gone into this. We would be very grateful if you can help us to keep our school a safe place by following all the procedures detailed above.

And finally, whilst the school experience will be a little different for any children returning to school, I can assure you the warmth and care shown towards your children will be the same. All staff are committed to help them settle back into school and to help them start enjoying their school experience again!

I hope this covers all questions you might have. However, please contact school on aycliffevillage@durhamlearning.net, if you have any further questions and we will do our best to answer these.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Mrs Helen Sutherland

Head Teacher