

Woodcroft Primary School



Phased return to school

Dear Parents/Carers

This last week has no doubt been my most challenging as a headteacher. The Department of Education has released guidance throughout the week that has required the school to constantly review and change plans should the government confirm that schools will open from Monday 1st June. Clearly, this is a worrying time for parents, pupils and staff, but I would like to assure you that we are taking every precaution we can to ensure the safe return of children to Woodcroft. This will require children to work and socialise in smaller groups (called bubbles), frequently wash their hands and follow good hygiene practices and where possible socially distance.

The government's advice clearly states that children should only be in groups (bubbles) of 15 or less and that adults should only be allocated to a single group. This reduces the contact that children have with other pupils across the school. Within these 'bubbles', it is impossible for children as young as four to socially distance. We will make sure that the children do not move between groups; that they wash their hands regularly; and that they follow good hygiene principles. However, **it will not be possible** for them to maintain a 2 metre gap between each other within their own group.

The reduction in class size also means that children may or may not be with their teacher and maybe in a different classroom. If they do not have their usual teacher they will have their familiar LSA. We recognise that this is not ideal, however the constraints of the guidance that we are working with means that adults and children cannot swap between 'bubbles'. These groups will stay together during break times and lunchtimes, with each 'bubble' having their own area of the playground.

Even though children are in smaller groups, due to their age they will still require a teacher and an LSA for their group. This drastically reduces down our teaching capacity and space within the school as each group requires their own classroom.

Timetable for children returning

The government have prioritised which Year Groups should return first and that this process should be slow and progressive, it also depends on the context, size and staffing availability for each school. After the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils, the government has stated that schools first bring back Year R, then Year 1 and then Year 6. Their 'ambition' is that all other year groups return before the Summer holidays, however no date has been set.

Pupils of key workers and children requiring additional support

Throughout this time the school has been open for children of key workers and those in need of additional support. We will continue to provide this regardless of your child's Year Group and the school will be contacting you via a phone call about your child attending. These children will be split into two groups: Year 2 and Year 3 together; and Year 4, 5 and 6. They will be taught by the same adults throughout the week and as per government guidelines will be restricted to 15 pupils per group. Depending on the demand for spaces within this group we may need to allocate additional adults which may further reduce teaching capacity across the school.

Mr Osborne and Mrs Holt will be teaching the Year 2 and Year 3 group

Mrs Hawkins and Miss Cutting will be teaching the Year 4, 5 and 6 group

Monday 1st June

Only if the conditions that the government set out are met will we open on Monday 1st June. If they are not achieved, the government could announce as late as the 28th May that schools will remain closed until further notice. No doubt we will find out this information at the same time as it is announced on the news!

Year R - From Monday 1st June

Monday to Thursday 9:20am to 2:30pm and Friday 9:20am to 12:30pm

Children with the surname G to Z: Year R classroom with Mrs Owen and Miss Humphries

Children with the surname A to F: Year 2 classroom with Miss Jones and Mrs Granshaw

Year 1 - From Monday 8th June

Monday to Thursday 9:10am to 2:40pm and Friday 9:20am to 12:45pm

Children with the surname beginning with M to Z: Year 1 classroom with Miss Cooper and Mrs Blackman

Children with the surname A to L: Year 3 classroom with Mrs Biggs and Mrs Tabbner

Year 6

At this time we do not have a date for Year 6s to return. This is not a situation that we are happy with and we will be constantly reviewing staff and pupil numbers to ensure that Year 6 can return as soon as possible. We are working closely with our secondary schools to ensure that a programme of transition is delivered before the end of term. This decision has only been made in accordance with the government guidance on prioritising which pupil groups return first and on our own reduced teaching capacity.

Mrs Biggs will still support you with home learning packs and be available at certain times of the day to discuss your work with you.

Years 2, 3, 4 and 5

At this stage it is the government's 'ambition' that these Year Groups return to school before the Summer holidays, however unless the number of pupils per 'bubble' changes, we do not see how schools will have the room or staff to support these pupils. We will however continue to produce work packs for these pupils and deliver these to homes weekly.

Why are we staggering pupils return?

Making sure that we have the systems in place to manage pupils safely around the school, ensuring that parents can drop off and collect their children safely are essential in our approach to re-opening. We already support a group of children who have continued to attend school and will now be expanding that group whilst introducing our youngest pupils back to school. Once these children have settled we will then bring back Year 1 a week later. It is important that new groups are introduced to the school on a Monday after the school has been thoroughly cleaned on a Friday.

Why are we shut on a Friday afternoon?

The school is shut on a Friday afternoon for all children except those of Key Workers. This is for two reasons:

- 1) To allow for a thorough cleaning of all classrooms and shared areas. This is in addition to the daily cleaning that the school undertakes.
- 2) To allow teachers to prepare home packs for their own Year Groups who are unable to attend school and organise the following weeks in school learning. We cannot cover teachers in the usual way as we need to protect pupils within their bubble.

Equipment in class and items from home

We have ordered extra stationery so pupils have their own equipment. Children will not be allowed to bring items in from home other than a packed lunch.

Arrival times and collection times

The times below have been set out to reduce the number of adults and pupils arriving at the same time. We expect adults to take reasonable precautions to ensure social distancing when arriving or leaving with their child. This means that you should not gather in groups on the school premises and remain 2 metres apart. Please follow the instructions for arriving and departing the school site.

Key worker children: 8:35am to 3:15pm on your required days

Years 2 & 3 – The door of the den

Years 4 & 5 – The hall door

Supported children who have already been contacted by school: 8:50am to 3:00pm Monday to Thursday and 1pm collection on a Friday (unless part-time hours have been arranged)

Years 2 & 3 – The door of the den

Years 4 & 5 – The hall door

Year R: 9:20am to 2:30pm Monday to Thursday and 12:30pm collection on Friday

Mrs Owen's Group – Year R classroom Door

Miss Jones' Group – Door to the right of the office (Mrs Granshaw will be there to meet you)

Year 1: 9:10am – 2:40pm Monday to Thursday and 12:45pm collection on Friday

Miss Cooper's Group – Year 1 classroom door

Mrs Biggs' Group – Door to the side of the Year 1 garden (Mrs Tabbner will be there to meet you)

In some instances for Year R and Year 1 pupils part-time hours may have been arranged – parents would have already been contacted about these arrangements.

If there are siblings they may be dropped and collected at the same time.

ALL children must be dropped off and collected from school by 1 adult only regardless of Year Group. Children must arrive promptly at their correct start time and be collected promptly at their finish time.

Break times and Lunch times

Each group will have their own area of the playground and their own equipment for break times and lunch times. Children will be supervised by the same adults when on the playground. This reduces the amount of children that pupils and adults will have contact with throughout the day.

Lunches: Children will require a packed lunch everyday including Fridays as they will be eating in their classrooms or outside when it is good weather. Children in Year R or 1 are entitled to a Universal Free School meal and we will provide them with a packed lunch. Children who are attending in other Year Groups will need a packed lunch unless they are entitled to a Free School Meal. **There will be no hot lunches.**

Free School Meals

Since the lockdown began we have been providing food parcels to any child who is entitled to Free School Meals.

During half-term we have provided Food vouchers to the value of £15 per child entitled to a Free School Meal. This is not the same as Universal Free School Meal (Years R, 1 and 2). We have also issued a further £15 voucher for the week of the 1st June. Depending on the number of children in school and the number of available staff we may need to continue with food vouchers rather than food parcel deliveries for those children not attending school. If your child is attending school and is entitled to a Free School Meal then we will not issue a voucher as we will provide them with lunch in school.

Home packs

Home packs will still be produced for those pupils not in school.

Due to staff availability the delivery days of these packs may need to change.

We will not be sending reading books home for those children attending school. This again is government advice reducing the risk of transmitting the virus from one household to another.

School office and meetings

Working with parents and having an 'open-door' policy is essential to our school ethos. However, although our door will remain open, we must insist on several measures to ensure the safety of school staff and the parent community.

- Only one adult in the office reception area at anytime
- If you require a meeting with a member of staff please call the office to arrange an appointment

We will have members of staff on the playground in the morning who can discuss your concerns (following social distancing guidelines) and arrange appointments for you.

School Uniform

We are removing the requirement for children to wear school uniform for this half-term only. We recognise that many families will be suffering financially during this period of time and purchasing new uniform before the Summer holidays is a burden that families could do without.

Where possible we would still like children to wear school uniform, however if they cannot then pupils must be dressed in smart, clean clothes and must wear appropriate shoes or trainers. Sandals and open-toed shoes are unacceptable and children will be sent home if they are wearing these or parents will need to bring in appropriate footwear.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and Clinically vulnerable children

Below is the government's definition of individuals who need to shield or take additional care:

- *children who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions have been advised to shield. **We do not expect people in this category to be attending school and we will continue to support learning at home as much as possible.** Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Few if any children will fall into this category, but parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.*
- *a child who lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, can attend their education or childcare setting*
- *if a child/young person lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the [guidance on shielding](#), it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, if they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home.*

If you believe that you or your child falls into one of these categories please contact the school to discuss your needs.

Cleaning and Hygiene

Ensuring that we maintain hygiene standards and teach children to frequently wash their hands and 'catch it and bin it' will be essential on their return. Children will wash their hands on arrival, before and after break times and when an activity involves the use of different equipment.

We are closing on a Friday afternoon to allow for a deep cleaning of the school on a frequent basis and we are establishing a cleaning plan which will ensure that the school is thoroughly cleansed.

Breakfast and after school clubs

Unfortunately, we are unable to run either a breakfast club or after school clubs at this time, but will re-introduce them as soon as it is safe to do so.

Moving forward

We are preparing for this plan to be put in place from Monday 1st June, but this will only occur if the government confirm that conditions are safe for us to do so. We do not know yet when additional Year Groups will return to school. I know that this will be extremely frustrating for many of you as it is for us, however we must follow the guidance we have been given which through limiting the number of pupils in each group reduces our teaching capacity and our available space.

I fully appreciate that many parents will be nervous about their children returning to school, but the plan that we have developed will both minimise the risk whilst ensuring children feel safe in school. This plan is constantly under review and we will follow government guidance, but also ensure that we are doing our best for the pupils and families of Woodcroft Primary School. We must also remember that the government may decide as late as the 28th May not to open schools and this plan could therefore be delayed.

If you have any questions regarding the information contained in this letter please do not hesitate in contacting myself or the Senior Leadership Team.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your continued efforts and support during this incredibly challenging time. I am extremely proud of our pupils at Woodcroft and their perseverance and positive outlook that they have demonstrated.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Fanning
Headteacher
Woodcroft Primary school