



BEARWOOD Primary and Nursery School

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Learning, Enjoying & Succeeding Together

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones well. Once again, I must thank you on behalf of all the staff at Bearwood for your continuing support during this incredibly challenging time.

I am writing to you to let you know how we are preparing to open our school in the forthcoming weeks should government plans go ahead. The Government information for schools is regularly updated, so I apologise that sometimes plans change at short notice.

In line with government guidelines, we are carrying out thorough risk assessments and planning how we can accommodate children in Nursery, Year R, Year 1 and Year 6, whilst maintaining a safe environment for children and staff. Please be aware that the Government's date of 1st June for the phased re-opening of schools is only provisional and subject to whether 'the rate of infection is decreasing, and the tests set out by the Prime Minister are met'.

Having had the opportunity to speak to parents and staff, I know that many people are feeling a mix of relief and anxiety as we enter this next stage of a phased re-opening of our school. I hope that the information below will provide reassurance to those families that have decided to send their child back to school. Below I have explained how we will operate when we start our phased reopen, so that everyone is kept safe.

We will begin the phased approach and below is our intended timeframe, however this is subject to change:

- 1st June 2020 children of key workers and vulnerable children.
- 2nd June 2020 pupils from Nursery and Reception whose parents have told us that they would like to return to school.
- 8th June 2020 pupils from Year 1 whose parents have told us that they would like to return to school.
- 15th June 2020 pupils from Year 6 whose parents have told us that they would like to return to school.

We will be sending out a social story for your child, which will inform you of the group they are in and the assigned adult(s). (We do not intend to change groups unless we experience an increase/decrease in numbers prior to your child returning to school.)



In its advice, the government has set out a 'hierarchy of controls' - 5 important areas that schools can act on to significantly reduce the risk of infection.

1. Minimising contact with those who have or live with someone with symptoms of COVID 19.

We will continue to strictly follow government guidance regarding any staff or pupils who develop symptoms or become unwell. The government has also set out clear guidance to schools regarding any confirmed cases of COVID 19 and all staff will have additional guidance on this. We will be expecting all staff and families to continue to do all they can to follow guidance in and out of school regarding contact and social distancing.

2. Increasing pupils and staff personal hygiene

We will incorporate handwashing into our daily timetable. In readiness for opening, we have ordered plenty of soap and hand towels. We will plan regular opportunities for children to wash their hands throughout the school day and will monitor this to ensure that it happens for at least 20 seconds each time. We will have posters around the school sharing a number of important messages and all adults will remind the pupils of these messages. In preparation for this, please watch the following video on hand washing with your child <https://youtu.be/bQCP7waTRWU>.

3. Ensuring good respiratory hygiene

We will continue to support pupils to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'. We will have additional tissues around the classrooms and will be increasing the amount of times that bins are emptied during the school day.

4. Increased cleaning of surfaces and equipment

We have made the decision as a school to increase the amount a time a cleaner is in school so that they will be able to clean throughout the day, when safe to do so. Over the course of the school day, surfaces do and will get touched, for example door handles. We will have effective cleaning arrangements in place but will also need to take additional steps. We will give individual children their own equipment to use. We have organised a set of school equipment for each child, new workbooks will be provided and these will be kept in a labelled folder that we will provide. Pupils' work will remain in school each day where verbal feedback will be provided during lesson time, but work will not be marked to ensure reduced contact contamination. This will remain on a child's individual desk at all times. Children will keep their lunch and drink bottles with them under their chair. (Reminder that lunch must come to school in a disposal bag). They may also bring a sun hat or coat if necessary. If your child has been receiving free school meals these must be ordered through Chartwells by midnight on 24th May 2020 if your child is returning the 1st June, midnight on 31st May if your child is returning on the 8th June and by the midnight on 7th June if your child is returning on the 15th June. Unfortunately we will be unable to provide alternative meals. Where individual equipment cannot be provided, we will make sure equipment is cleaned between uses. We request that children do not bring into school any additional items or toys from home.

As the guidance dictates, all soft furnishings and items that are more difficult to keep clean, have been removed from the classrooms. Therefore, please support us in keeping all non-essential items at home.

Pupils will not be able to move around the room as they have done previously and will be encouraged to stay at their place. However, we have planned regular breaks and outdoor time to provide physical movement and time to learn and relax outside.

5. Re-organising pupils and the school day

The biggest change to school life that we are planning is how we can effectively manage the number of pupils and staff that your children learn alongside and meet with in social times.

Class Groupings

In order to make class sizes smaller and minimise unnecessary contact between groups of pupils and staff, we will organise children and staff into 'Bubbles'. Each 'Bubble' will have no more than 15 pupils in it and these bubbles will not mix with children or staff from any other bubble during the school day. Each bubble will be allocated a classroom, but this may not be the classroom your child was previously in. Children will be placed into bubbles by senior staff and notified of their group shortly. Your child will receive some pictures to support this transition. Whilst we know that it is not possible for everyone to be with a teacher they are familiar with or to work alongside their full friendship group, staff involved will do their very best to make this a positive experience for your child. By operating in bubbles of no more than 15 children we are able to reduce the risk of infection from children or adults in other class groups. Other adults will only enter their class space in the case of emergency.

In order to best support pupils as they return we will introduce the following timings for the school day. You will be told later today which group your child is in and unfortunately we are unable to change these timings due to the complexity of organisation.

Group	Start time	End of day
1 EYFS	9.15 am	2.30 pm (Friday 12.10)
2 EYFS	9.30 am	2.45 pm (Friday 12.20)
3 KS1 Key worker	8.30 am	3.10 pm (Friday 12.45)
4 KS2 Key worker	8.45am	3.20 pm (Friday 12.50)
5 KS2 Key worker	9.00 am	3.30 pm (Friday 1.00)
6	TBC	TBC
7	TBC	TBC
8 Year 1	8.30 am	2.35 pm (Friday 12.30)
9 Year 1	8.45 am	2.50 pm (Friday 12.40)
10 Year 6	9.15 am	3.00 pm (Friday 12.50)
11 Year 6	9.30 am	3.10 pm (Friday 1.00)

If your child is in Nursery, their collection time will be at midday, Monday-Friday.

This schedule must be adhered to strictly with no lateness accepted. If you are late at the beginning of the day, your child will not be able to access school until 9.45 am which is after the last drop off slot.

Making beginnings and ends of days easier and safer

The decision to stagger the school day for pupils has been made to support a safe start and end to the day; to allow for an enhanced clean to be completed after pupils and staff have left; and also to support our children to adjust to learning in a different way after a long period out of school.

The school carpark has been pedestrianised and during drop offs and collections times there are no vehicles permitted on site. Due to the safety of pupils there are no exceptions to this.

At the allotted drop off or collection time, please wait at two metre distances in the school car park. Please do not arrive early or late, as we must not have any gatherings outside our school. We will be operating a one way system around the car park. You will enter via the pedestrian gate, continue around the outside of the car park to drop your child off at the green gates to the playground and then exit through the middle of the car park and out of the entrance for vehicles. Please see the attached map. The school staff will be waiting to welcome you at the top green gates (by the pre-school), where the pupils will be asked to walk in or out on an individual basis. You will then need to leave the area as quickly as possible to allow for the next group of children. Please do not walk home in groups and do not return back towards the pedestrian gate.

If you miss your allotted time, it is likely other groups will be entering or leaving school and we will be unable to greet and handover your child until this has taken place.

Only one parent/carer will be allowed to enter the school site with their child. If siblings need to enter the school site during drop off or pick up they must remain close to the parent at all times. No children should be allowed to use the school site to play or use any equipment.

Parents should not stop to talk to school staff or other parents while on school site. If teachers need to communicate with parents this will be done after school via telephone or by email. The school office will be closed to parents; parents can communicate through email as they have been and messages will be passed on to staff.

What can parents and carers do to help?

We are mindful of the worry and stress this situation has had on our children and will be planning activities to support their mental health and wellbeing during the next seven weeks.

All pupils will be expected to wear full school uniform. At present, PE kit is not required.

In the coming days, you will receive a home school agreement. Please take the time to read these through with your child when these are received. In order to receive this document it is vital that

you login to the MCAS Parent Portal at www.mychildatschool.com using the User Name and unique Invitation Code that you were sent today.

Lastest advice regarding pupils wearing PPE.

The government guidance states 'Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended. Face coverings may be beneficial for short periods indoors where there is a risk of close social contact with people you do not usually meet and where social distancing and other measures cannot be maintained, for example on public transport or in some shops. This does not apply to schools or other education settings. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings.' If a parent chooses to send a child to school with a mask, your child will be responsible for the mask at all times and must know how to use it properly so that they do not pass germs to others. Adults in school will not be able to help children take masks on or off. Children will be expected to wear their masks all day. If they remove the mask for eating lunch, they must keep it on their person or lower it so it is around their neck rather than putting it on a surface.

Keeping pupils and staff safe

By having a phased reopening, we will be able to check, review and amend systems as needed. Having had the children of key workers in school for the last half term, the systems that we had initially put in place have already evolved. If at any point I felt that the pupils were unsafe and I could not implement the changes needed immediately, the school would close until it was safe for pupils to return. I would never compromise pupil safety and this has been at the forefront of all the planning that has already taken place.

I very much hope that this letter begins to answer some of the questions that you will understandably have ahead of a return to school. Planning is ongoing and I would urge you to be patient as we continue to update you over the next couple of weeks.

Kind regards,

Laura Bennett
Head Teacher