



Friday 10th July 2020

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

Yesterday I wrote that we will be welcoming all children back to school in September. The Government Guidance for this can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Schools are asked to put in place the following measures so that risks associated to COVID-19 are reduced. The table below is taken directly from the guidance document:

System of controls

This is the set of actions schools must take. They are grouped into 'prevention' and 'response to any infection'.

Prevention:

- 1) minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school
- 2) clean hands thoroughly more often than usual
- 3) ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- 4) introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach
- 5) minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible
- 6) where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)

Numbers 1 to 4 must be in place in all schools, all the time.

Number 5 must be properly considered and schools must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances.

Number 6 applies in specific circumstances.

Response to any infection:

- 7) engage with the NHS Test and Trace process
- 8) manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) amongst the school community
- 9) contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice

Numbers 7 to 9 must be followed in every case where they are relevant.

Number 5 control measure is to 'minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.' Underneath it states that, 'Number 5 must be properly considered and schools must put in place measures that suit their particular circumstances.'

Minimising contact

The Government Guidance suggests keeping groups as separate 'bubbles' as a way of minimising contact between individuals. The plan in this school is to have each class as a 'bubble' and the two Reception classes as a 'bubble' sharing an outdoor area. The 'bubbles' will not mix at playtime or lunchtime in order to minimise contact with children from other groups. We have established excellent routines for this in the summer term and feel confident that using the procedures we have in place (designated toilets for set groups, one way systems, allocated outdoor areas and staggered break and lunchtimes) we will be able to minimise contacts across 'bubbles'.

Social Distancing

This term, we have found that the younger children in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years and even many of the children in Key Stage 2 are not able to maintain social distance from each other or the staff in classrooms and the playground. We also do not believe this is good for children's educational or social and emotional development.

In September the adults working in these year groups will not be maintaining social distance from the children and will engage in their play and learning. Young children need adult interaction and we are keen to give them the support they need when they return to full time education. Staff will try to limit the time they spend in direct face to face contact with an individual child, keeping this to less than 10 minutes.

The staff working in Key Stage 2 will maintain social distance from the children where possible but there will be times that staff need to support children with their learning or provide emotional support when the social distance will not be maintained. Children will not be kept two metres apart. In the classroom, children will be sat with a partner, in rows facing the front of the room and we will limit movement around the classroom. We will also limit the sharing of equipment and will ensure that resources are thoroughly cleaned between groups.

The Government Guidance states that,

'All teachers and other staff can operate across different classes and year groups in order to facilitate the delivery of the school timetable. Where staff need to move between classes and year groups, they should try and keep their distance from pupils and other staff as much as they can, ideally 2 metres from other adults. Again, we recognise this is not likely to be possible with younger children and teachers in primary schools can still work across groups if that is needed to enable a full educational offer.'

The Senior Leadership Team and Governors have assessed the risk to pupils and staff of staff operating across different classes and year groups and feel that as staff cannot maintain social distance with the children, we should try to limit staff movement across classes as much as possible.

This is an organisational challenge for the school as teachers are entitled to PPA time out of the classroom each week and this would ordinarily be covered by a teacher / two teachers moving across the school covering up to three classes a day and up to nine classes a week. PPA time is a teacher's time for planning, preparation and assessment. It is 10% of the teaching time and in our school this is approximately two hours and 45 mins a week.

The School Leadership Team and Governing Board would like to consult with parents and guardians on a change to the school timetable to limit movement of staff across the school and address this concern.

Proposed Change to the School Timetable

What is the proposed change?

The Governing Board is proposing a change to the school finish time on Friday afternoons. This would mean that children are collected from school earlier on a Friday afternoon to enable teaching staff to have their PPA sessions without adults moving across the classes therefore minimising contact between groups. Children would finish approximately 2 hours earlier on a Friday.

Would this mean less teaching time during the school week?

No. The school is proposing to make the school day slightly longer from Monday – Thursday and the children’s lunchtime break 10 minutes shorter which would ensure that children still access the same number of hours of teaching in school.

Will having a slightly shorter lunch time break have a negative impact on children’s social development?

At this time, we feel that a 50 minute break will be enough time for children to engage in play with the children in their class in their designated outdoor area. Children will not be using the whole playground or mixing with other year groups during this time. Children will also be taking part in lots of PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) activities and will have an increased focus on social development activities during teaching time to support with this.

What are the benefits for children?

PPA staff would not be mixing with large numbers of children across the school throughout the week therefore minimising contacts and potentially minimising the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Children would have the consistency of being taught by their class teacher across the week rather than having ‘cover’ teachers which some children find challenging.

The teachers who usually cover classes for PPA would be able to carry out interventions with individuals or small groups which would support ‘catch up’ after such a significant time away from school for some pupils.

Will other staff move across groups in the school?

Yes. There will be some staff movement in order to fully support children’s academic and social needs but we will limit this to the movement of staff across ‘phases’. Each phase consists of two to three classes:

EYFS Sun, Stars and Moon	KS1 Mercury, Venus and Earth	KS2 Mars and Jupiter	UKS2 Saturn, Neptune and Pluto
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Some movement of staff is necessary so that interventions and specialist teachers can support children as needed. Using this model, a teacher or teaching assistant would be able to carry out interventions with individuals or small groups from the Upper Key Stage 2 phase (Saturn, Neptune and Pluto). This would be the same for visiting professionals e.g. we have a Speech and Language therapist for one day a week and we would ask that she only works across one phase on the day that she visits e.g. the EYFS phase (Sun, Stars and Moon).

Our Sports Coach would continue to work with classes across the school in KS1 and KS2. However, he would be expected to maintain social distance at all times and PE will take place outside (weather permitting) or in the hall and he would teach from a 2 metre distance.

Would this affect Nursery 15 hours and 30 hours entitlement?

No. Children in receipt of 15 hours would be invited into school Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning or Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning. Children would receive the full 15 hours. Children in receipt of 30 hours would be invited into school Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning and would receive the 30 hours across this time.

Would this be a permanent change?

No. We are initially proposing this change for the first term of the academic year. In December, it will be reviewed following risk assessment in light of Government Guidance and the national and local COVID 19 data. A decision will then be made for the spring term. We would consult parents, staff and Governors at each stage.

Below there is a link to a survey regarding this consultation and we would appreciate it if all parents and guardians responded. We will share the results of the consultation next week and inform parents and guardians of next steps for September.

Please click the link to complete the survey <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/8W2BBZH>

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Day', written in a cursive style.

Stephanie Day
Headteacher