

Dear Parents,

We have tried to answer some questions that we are regularly being asked. I hope they are useful.

Why not ask Year 6 or key worker children to finish 2 weeks early and allow other children back for a turn?

We have been told very clearly both in the Government guidance for schools and by the Local Authority that the criteria for children in school has to be upheld. Therefore we cannot ask Year 6 or key worker children to not come in for the last 2 weeks in order to teach other children. The guidance for school is in this link.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19>

Why can you now open on Friday for our children and not before?

We wanted to arrange some contact with all children before the end of the academic year. Following recent changes, we calculated that we could manage this if we excluded children who had already accessed face to face time in school. This coincided with the recent changing of restrictions announced last week. We have rapidly made plans to make sure we can offer this facility and maintain the hygiene, cleaning and use of outdoor spaces and toilets for example. We are also able to do this now as my staff have kindly worked overtime to plan for lessons until the end of term, leaving them available to be in school for the next 2 Fridays.

Why aren't teachers hosting live Zoom video calls with children?

We understand that many parents and children will be missing their class teacher, but live video chat is still not a viable option for our school. Reasons for this include safeguarding- there is no guarantee that the only recipients of the video stream will be children; accessibility- not all our children have access to the technology needed to be involved in such an experience, and lastly trade union advice - teachers' unions have stated that members are not to participate in live video chat online with pupils. We will instead continue to call home and communicate and engage with children through pre-recorded video, as well as comments on Google classroom stream.

Why is the school not moving to 1 metre social distancing immediately?

The guidance about 1 metre plus is if 2 metres is not manageable. This is from 4th July. The Government guidance for the return to school for all pupils in September has still not been released to us. Everyone has differing views on social distancing and the safety of working in the current situation. The guidance for schools is what we have been following and will continue to follow to be completely transparent and for the safety of everyone.

I hear some schools have 15 in a class.

We are in contact with other schools to compare provisions and learn from each other. There are some who may have up to 15 in a class based on larger classroom sizes. Some of our classes (particularly our Y4 rooms) are very small and limited. At

the moment, everyone who is eligible and has been offered a place and wanted one, has received a place for their child, for at least some time in school. We have also received children on different days so that our weekly *bubble* size does not go over 15.

Why have you offered spaces to make classes of more than 8 or 9 children this Friday?

We are aware that not all families will take up this offer based on earlier conversations and their differing views regarding their child's safety in school or personal circumstances such as shielding. We felt it was only fair to offer a space to all children but we are not expecting a 100% take up. We have asked all staff to be on hand should there be more children than a room will currently allow, for example teaching assistants can take 3 or 4 children into another shared or outdoor area on rotation. We may also use outdoor spaces as a means of seeing the children for one day.

Why can't you open more classrooms?

We are now using all of our classroom spaces. One of the biggest restrictions is the number of toilets and maintaining hygiene. We have had three new outdoor sinks installed and 6 portaloos including sinks and sanitisers to enable us to get more children into school and keep everyone as safe as possible.

How many children are in school?

We are seeing approximately a quarter of our children in the building at some point over each week, but three quarters of our children are still having to be home schooled which is a huge challenge for parents and the children.

What do teachers do when they are not in school?

We have a small number of school staff who are still having to shield. Apart from one, all class teachers are currently working in school. Teachers are entitled to PPA (planning, preparation and assessment) time out of class. This is what we normally offer on a Friday so that other adults do not have to go into their bubbles throughout the week. Time is also used on Friday to mark, plan and upload work for the Google classrooms, make calls and for general class admin.

Are you planning for a second wave?

We are making plans to prepare for a second wave. This will involve continuing to use the Google Classrooms in some form to keep this method of teaching and learning active. Recently, we have taken delivery of more staff computers. This has finally enabled us to record the short videos to say hello or goodbye to children for example. This wasn't possible to roll out until very recently.

If pubs are opening why are schools not opening fully?

We were as surprised as you when the Government announced that children would not be returning until September and not earlier as they had originally stated. Until guidance around distancing in schools has been shared it is hard to comment. To open all schools in September ***we are assuming*** they will remove the need to social distance children in schools, but distancing between adults in some form will remain.

What will happen in September?

With regard to September it is our fervent hope we are all back together again. However, we must wait for Government guidance on this as we do not yet know if we will be allowed to have 30 pupils in one room at one time. This Government document has been promised later this week. Despite the easing of lockdown, COVID-19 is still amongst us and we must do everything we can to keep our community safe.

It says on the news all pupils are returning.

Even today (29th June) we can see the Education Secretary on the news explaining that all children will be back in September. This is great news, but there is still no guidance released yet. It should be with us during this week.

What happens if a family goes away in the summer and needs to self-quarantine for 2 weeks. How will the school check?

Many people will choose to take a holiday now the restrictions for some countries have been relaxed. However we recognise it is hard for families who have relatives abroad who may have scheduled trips this year that were changed or even cancelled. We will continue to advise all our community to follow guidance to keep everyone safe. This may mean that a family will need to self-quarantine on their return. Again, the Government have not released any information on this, but have stated that they expect attendance to be compulsory for all children in September.