



Bellenden Primary School

Executive Headteacher: Mr Gregory Doey

Headteacher: Mrs Julie Ireland

Deputy Head: Mrs Alex Turnbull

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Thursday 21st May 2020

Dear Parent /Carer,

The government has announced the partial re-opening of schools for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from the 1st June and has provided schools with a loose framework in order to do so based on their individual school.

I am sure you will appreciate, there have been an enormous number of challenges and the advice and guidance is being constantly updated. This is the reason that I have not been able to write to you, with our current plans before today.

Firstly, I would like to reassure you that the safety of our pupils, families and staff is paramount and our decision making has been based around the best ways to limit transmission of the virus, to ensure that any contact results in a minimum viral load, whilst complying with the requirements placed on us by the government.

Firstly, we will **NOT reopen on Monday 1st June** for any year groups as we will be having an inset day for all staff.

The reason for this is that we need more time in order to plan and implement our detailed risk assessment and ensure we have the correct measures in place.

Senior leaders will work with staff prior to opening to carefully run through the logistics of working within a restricted school environment and with enhanced hygiene measures. This will be to ensure all staff are clear about the measures we have put in place and the new expectations to follow and to provide the necessary training so they feel confident before any children return to school.

What year groups will be invited to return to school?

- I can confirm that we will **not be reopening nursery or reception at this time**. Any changes to this decision will be made based on our capacity to cater safely and successfully for other year groups.
- Children of key workers in other year groups will continue to attend school like before half term and they will be accommodated in a mixed age grouping.
- It is our aim to open for Year 6 first on Tuesday the 2nd of June with staggered starting and leaving times between 9:00am and 1:30pm. We will communicate to parents on Monday the 1st of June what those timings will be.

- We will then invite children in Year 1 to return. We cannot give a date at present but will contact your year group when we do know.

- **Siblings in other year groups will not be able to attend school** until such time as their year group is invited by the government to return to school and that the school has the staff capacity in order to do so.

How will things be different?

We are required to have a maximum of 10 children in each class and so each class will be divided into three separate groups or *bubbles*, taught in separate classrooms. These bubbles will remain constant. You will appreciate that, in order to keep class sizes to a maximum of 10, children will not necessarily be taught by their own teacher but a member of staff will be allocated to teach each group.

Please be aware that there will be **no breakfast or afterschool club provision** on any day. Our kitchen caterers will be open to provide school packed lunches each day. These

will be served in classrooms in order to minimise close contact outside of bubbles and in order to facilitate timings and movement during lunchtimes.

Children will be asked to wear a fresh set of clothes every day so we are suspending the wearing of uniforms until further notice.

We have been provided with guidance on implementation of enhanced protective measures. Every effort will be made to adhere to the social distancing required of us, but

I am sure that you will appreciate that under these circumstances, with so many young children together, this cannot always be guaranteed. When making your personal

decision about whether to send your child back to school please note that the government advice states that *“We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff.”*

Amongst a raft of other measures we will be limiting movement around the school to ensure that bubbles do not cross over and children do not interact with other children outside of their bubble. There will be set times for handwashing. Bubbles will have separate break and lunch times and have their own zone in the playground. Drop off and collection will be staggered and will involve a change in entering and exiting the school playground. **Year 6 will be asked to enter through the main office entrance and parents will not be permitted to enter the school building at any time.**

What about cleaning and hygiene?

There will be additional cleaning staff on duty throughout the school day with a robust cleaning schedule, cleaning frequently touched surfaces. Toys and resources that cannot be easily cleaned will be removed prior to school opening.

There will be implementation of increased frequency of hand washing and enhanced respiratory hygiene (‘catch it, bin it, kill it’). We have ordered extra tissues, hand sanitisers and have lots of visible posters that remind children what to do throughout the school.

Children will be asked to wipe down their own workstation every day at various intervals.

I do, of course, understand that many parents will not be convinced about the safety of their child returning to school at this stage. Please rest assured that the decision on whether to send your child back to school or not is, at this stage, down to parental choice. If you decide that your child will not be returning to School at the present time there will be no penalties and no action will be taken against you.

Self-isolation and Symptoms

We will, of course, be totally reliant upon the vigilance of our school families to ensure that everyone follows the scientific advice on isolation and ensure that no one who may potentially be carrying the virus attends school.

Shielding

If you or a loved one is shielding, your child should also not attend school. If anyone in your family becomes ill or shows any symptoms we do need to know immediately so that we can ensure the safety of all.

Testing

The government have explained that there is now testing available for school children, staff and their families. If a child or staff member tests positive for Covid-19, all persons in that bubble will be expected to self-isolate for 14 days.

What will the learning be like in home and at school?

Government guidelines state that schools will not be teaching the normal curriculum. Schools are to provide lessons and activities to keep children engaged and occupied. If your child remains at home they will continue to be provided with the same online learning materials they have had since lockdown began. Some of this may also be used with the children coming into school.

We'd like to thank you for your continuous support in helping your child learn from home. I understand that this can often not be easy. We'll keep you updated once we know more about when schools will be able to reopen for other year groups. In the meantime, we hope you have a restful half term break. Teachers have not set online work for next week to allow you time to spend with your family. I know you will join with me in hoping everyone in the school community remains safe.

If you have any questions or concerns please email office@bellenden'southwark.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

Gregory Doey

Executive Headteacher