



20 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to you to update you on the situation with regard to the Government's proposed re-opening of schools in England. As you know, the Government announced that, subject to their 5 tests being met, primary schools would re-open in some way for pupils in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from 1st June. We appreciate that this is a time of concern for everyone and so we are seeking to provide you with all of the necessary information.

As yet the 5 tests have not been fully met and re-opening is conditional upon this changing.

These 5 tests are:

1. Making sure that the NHS can cope.
2. A sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rate.
3. The rate of infection decreasing to manageable levels (the R rate to be well under 1).
4. Ensuring testing capacity is in place.
5. Ensuring that the re-opening of schools and the lifting of other restrictions would not risk a second peak of infection.

Since the announcement on Sunday 10th May, the Government has issued several guidance documents. Some intended to assist schools in planning for the proposed return and ultimately schools have a huge responsibility and the safety and welfare of pupils and staff must be at the heart of all decisions.

It is important to note that, in order to limit risk as far as possible and in order to attempt to ensure the safety of all, school life would be very different to what it is like normally, however within the necessary restrictions, as a school we endeavour to make the school an environment in which our children still feel happy and safe.

The Government's rationale, guidance and advice to parents has been issued and can be found by following the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>



We would like to take this opportunity to thank parents of our Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children for their responses to our question regarding whether they intended to send their child back to school if the school were to re-open from June 1st. This was very helpful in the planning process, however we would like to reassure parents that they are not tied to any response they gave without further information about how this might happen.

The Government provide advice and guidelines but, while they are keen for children to return to school for a variety of reasons, they are not enforcing school attendance by law at this time and as parents, it is for you to make the decision you feel is best for your child based on the information provided.

What will a return to school look like at Wolsingham Primary School?

The following information is based on Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children returning to school ONLY and has been collated in consultation with staff and governors.

In order to implement a suitable level of social distancing within the school, each class will be split into two smaller groups (no more than 15 children) - Group A and Group B.

Each group of children will not mix with any other group of children and will only have contact with 2 adults, who as far as possible, will always remain the same. Although some children will not be taught by their usual class teacher, the adults they will be working with will be well known to them (i.e. will be a Teacher or Teaching Assistant working in their Key Stage and where possible will have taught them or worked with them previously).

As a school, we made the decision following the Easter break to provide learning opportunities for children via Seesaw which follow our summer curriculum as closely as possible. The aim of which was to enable them to continue to access the curriculum as they would have done had they been in school and reduce the gaps in learning caused by the school closing due to the pandemic. Therefore learning opportunities in school will mirror the work assigned for all children on Seesaw, providing further teaching and direction and additional learning activities such as well-being and exercise.

In Year 1 and Year 6, each child will have their own desk and necessary equipment needed to complete their work and they will be encouraged to remain seated throughout their time in the classroom.

In Nursery and Reception, activities will be teacher directed and, where possible, enable them to learn and play in smaller groups – equipment that they use will be disinfected before use by any other group, however please be aware that children within the same group may use the same equipment before it is disinfected again following the activity. The outdoor areas will be utilised wherever possible.



School start times and end times will be staggered and specific entrances to the school used in order to limit the number of parents and children in any one area. Reception and Year 6 children will enter the school grounds via the Uppertown (car park) entrance, with Reception children using the Reception door onto the car park and Year 6 their normal entrance. Nursery and Year 1 pupils will enter via the Lydgate Lane (field) entrance.

Those children who are Group A children will enter school between 8.45am and 9.00am and Group B children between 9.15am and 9.30am. Markers indicating social distancing will be in place and we ask that parents do not gather either on school premises or at school entrances, but come onto and leave the premises as quickly as possible.

At the end of the school day, those children who are Group A children will leave between 3.00pm and 3.15pm and Group B children between 3.30pm and 3.45pm and again we ask that parents do not gather either on school premises or at school entrances.

Playtimes and lunchtimes will also be staggered to ensure that each group has time outside without coming into contact with other groups and time to carry out necessary activities such as going to the toilet and washing hands. Each group will be split into smaller groups of no more than 5 children during playtimes and lunchtimes and class teachers have been asked to look at friendships among the children who are in school to ensure that the smaller groups include their friends. Younger children, particularly, will be provided with a coloured bib and a colour co-ordinated area of the playground to help them to see where they are able to play and who they are able to play with. Small amounts of equipment may be provided for each smaller group to play with, however please be aware that children within the same group may use the same equipment before it is disinfected again following use.

Initially, the hall will not be used for school lunches. Children who usually have a school lunch will be provided with a packed lunch that will be delivered to and eaten in the classroom or outside (weather dependent).

Regular hand washing will take place throughout the day with hand sanitiser also being provided in each classroom and cleaning of high contact areas and equipment will take place at various points throughout the day.

There will be no Breakfast Club or After School Club facilities available for the majority of children. Arriving earlier than the stated start time and leaving later than the stated end time will only be available for children of Key Workers and only upon prior arrangement. Key worker children from year groups other than Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 will be grouped together in one of the other classrooms.

Parents will not be able to enter the school building and are encouraged to make contact with the school via phone or email if necessary. Other visitors to the school will be limited to only those who are absolutely essential.



We ask that parents help us to limit the risk of infection within the school, by continuing to monitor their child closely and not sending them into the school if they have a persistent cough or high temperature or are unwell in anyway. We will ask children to be collected from school if we have concerns. If any member of the child's household shows symptoms of Covid-19, then they should stay at home and isolate with their household for 14 days.

We hope that this provides parents with some clarification as to what will be put in place within the school to enable it to re-open and enables parents to make a more informed decision as to whether they wish their child to return to school. If you have any further questions, we would be grateful if you would email them to wolsinghamprimary@durhamlearning.net and we will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible.

We will send out further communication next week if the circumstances look as though the planned phased re-opening of schools in England is definitely going to take place from June 1st, firstly asking for clarification as to whether you intend to send your child to school and following that to indicate a proposed date of re-opening, group allocations and further more specific information that the parents of children coming into school might need.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

S. Kitching

S. Kitching
Headteacher

