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Tuesday 12th May 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

You will undoubtedly have seen the recent Prime Minister's briefings regarding the planned return of children to early years, schools and further education settings commencing Monday 1st June - **if the transmission rate of coronavirus continues to decrease and it supports the safe return of staff and children.** If, in the ensuing weeks, the government's plans and intentions are realised, in line with the guidance released, we will begin to plan for the welcome return of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. In the meantime, keyworker children in other year groups will continue to access school and provision.

The guidance also states that it is the government's intention for all children to return to primary school at some point – providing them with a month of schooling - before the summer holiday. This currently remains under review. The government intend to monitor the impact children's return to school has on the risks posed by the virus – with the safety of children and staff remaining an utmost priority. It is advised that a hierarchy of controls must be implemented in order to continue to reduce the risk of transmission of infection. These include:

- Minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend childcare settings, schools or colleges;
- Cleaning hands more often than usual - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered;
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene - promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach;
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach;
- Minimising contact and mixing by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times).

As parents/ carers, you will no doubt have numerous questions relating to the reopening of schools for the specified year groups and in particular, how we will endeavour to maintain social distancing. Using the government's guidance released this week, I will outline our school's initial thoughts and plans to it. The full document is accessible via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>. The measures we will put into place will follow and adhere to both this report and that of Public Health England who continue to stress the importance of applying regular hand cleaning, hygiene and cleaning measures.

How we will implement protective measures:

- The year groups returning will be split into small class groups of approximately 15 children in each

From tiny acorns **mighty oaks** grow...



- group – children will remain in the same small group at all times of the day with the same teacher, teaching assistant and lunchtime supervisor;
- Classrooms will be organised to maintain space between seats and desks where possible;
- The timetable will be refreshed by looking at the lessons and activities that can be delivered and which ones can take place outdoors;
- Movement around school will be reduced wherever possible with the introduction of marked foot-steps and routes (The guidance states that brief, transitory contact, such as passing in a corridor, presents low risk);
- As far as possible, break and lunch times will be staggered and outside play areas will be designated for particular year groups, particularly in the initial return to school of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children;
- Staggered drop-offs and collection times will be established including protocols that minimise adult to adult contact whilst on our school premises with only one adult being allowed to accompany their child (The report stresses the importance of eliminating the gathering of adults at allotted drop off and collection times);
- Eliminate the sharing of equipment between groups of children.

Cleaning and hygiene:

Whilst the school has been closed for the majority of children, a deep clean has been undertaken and upon the designated year groups' return, the following measures will operate:

- Children will be required to regularly wash their hands using soap and water for 20 seconds using sinks within the classrooms where adult guidance can be given;
- Work surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected more regularly including desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches and hand rails;
- Staff will insist on the washing of hands upon arrival at school, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing;
- Children will be encouraged to refrain from touching their mouth, eyes and nose;
- Children will be reminded to use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it') with an emptying of bins throughout the day;
- Ventilate classrooms as much as possible by opening windows and ventilation units;
- Prop doors open, where safe to do so, to limit the use of door handles and to aid ventilation;
- In the instance of your child having a personal accident, we will ask you to come into school to either collect them to take them home or wash and change them in school.

If my child or another child becomes ill at school:

If your child develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, you will be notified immediately and be asked to collect your child; you will be required to self-isolate for 7 days. Fellow household members will also be required to self-isolate for 14 days. The guidance explains that you will have access to a test if your child displays symptoms of coronavirus and if your child tests negatively, they will be able to return to school and family household members will end their self-isolation.

Where a child or staff member tests positive, the group they are working in will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

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Whilst detailed, I hope this letter and guidance is useful for supporting your child's return to school and for allaying some concerns you may have. I am aware that much discussion ensues regarding the wearing of facemasks; the guidance states that the wearing of a face covering or facemasks does not apply to schools or other education settings and is therefore not recommended. Changing habits, cleaning and hygiene are effective measures alone in controlling the spread of the virus.

For guidance relating to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6's return to school on Monday 1st June, I will write again next week giving details of specific timings for children's arrival and collection from school. Times will be adjusted for each year group in order for us to ensure we do not create extensive queueing for the drop off and collection of children. Breakfast Club provision will be available from 7.45a.m. for a prepaid £2.20 cost - via ParentPay. This cost will also apply to keyworker's children hereon. During this initial reopening of school, there will not be any after school provision, i.e. Funsters or extra-curricular club activities.

In order for us to prepare fully and safely for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children's return, school will close on Friday 22nd May for half term and reopen for these specified year groups on Monday 1st June.

For parents/ carers and children of other year groups, as soon as I receive information from the Department for Education for the wider opening of school to include all year groups, I will notify you immediately.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the School Office by either telephone, 01902 558517, or email, oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk. Thank you.

Please keep safe and I look forward to being able to say hello to you and to welcome you back to school soon.

Best regards,

S Arnold

Mr S Arnold
Headteacher

Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 Parents/ Carers Only

Please click on the following link to indicate your intention for your child to return to school on Monday 1st June 2020. We will use the information to help us prepare for your child's return.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=n-nwrUuRD0WALH_XTtX2Cu92nkJpkHhIrlQt8iwPi4RUNExYMUZVWVdOREFOUTIZUUpOQUFGOE4OS4u

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