Dear parents/carers,

I hope this message finds you all safe and well. As we approach the end of another week in lock down, I wanted to write and inform you of preparations made so far, to allow us to open at the earliest, on June 1st. As you will be aware the government has indicated it hopes schools will be able to start a phased return of pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from this date. We are busily putting all the government's guidelines into effect, and I will outline below what this means and how school will look and operate. Please always know that your child is at the heart of all we do, but we must follow the DfE's guidelines to ensure that we are minimising risks as much as possible to keep the school safe for our entire community. When we re-open school will look very different, and normal practices will be replaced by new protocols.

Is school safe for the children to return?

I am frequently asked this question and my honest answer is I do not know. I cannot give you a guarantee it is safe for schools to open. It is the government and the Chief Medical Officer's job to decide this, and to communicate this to parents. All I can guarantee is that at school we will take all appropriate steps to make school as safe as we possibly can.

Should I send my child back to school?

This is your decision and if you decide you do not want to at this time, please be reassured you can change your mind at any stage. You must send your child back when you feel it is safe to do so. If you decide to wait a week or so, there will be no attendance action taken against you.

Social distancing

We will do our very best to ensure social distancing at school. Can I promise this will always be in place? Sadly I cannot. It will be near impossible to maintain social distancing with small children all the time. However, as stated above, we will do our very best and will ensure adults socially distance in school as far as is possible. Please also know that if your child is distressed or hurt we will not keep them at arms length to ensure they are 2m away. Common sense in all situations must prevail and the children's well being will always be our top priority.

Bubbles

You may have heard a lot of talk about schools operating with a bubble system. This means that your child will be placed in a bubble of no more than 15 children. We will have 4 bubbles in operation - one for Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and key worker children (from Years 2-5). Staff will be assigned to a bubble and there will be no interaction between bubbles. Your child will stay with their group, and break and lunch times will be staggered so they are always protected from the other bubbles. This measure has been deemed crucial to ensure there is no cross contamination between pupils and staff.

Drop off and pick up

Drop off and pick up times will be staggered. Times will be:

Key worker children - 8.50 am to 2.50 pm

Year 6 - 9 am to 3 pm

Year 1 - 9.15 am to 3.15 am

Reception - 9.30 am to 3.30 pm

When you drop your child off in the morning or pick up in the afternoon, please keep 2m apart from other families. Please enter the yard in the normal way and exit through the double gates onto the car park. Could we ask, as per the government guidelines, that only one parent comes to school to drop off or pick up. Again, as per government guidelines, the play equipment in the playground will not be available to be used by the children. The teacher will blow a whistle at the designated time and send children, one by one, to their class. There will be another member of staff waiting in the class. Mrs Jobbins would like Reception parents to please use her class room to enter and pick up - but again please ensure you are 2m away from other families. If you have siblings and do not want to wait for your second child's staggered start and end time, then please drop off at the latest time and pick up at the earliest. Please note that Goslings do not currently plan to operate in June.

Lunch

We will be staggering break and lunch times to ensure children stay safe in their bubbles. We will be offering a packed lunch as our school lunch every day. There will not be hot food served. If you are sending your child into school with their own packed lunch, please make the lunch fully disposable.

Classes

While in class the children will not be sharing equipment or resources. If your child does not have a pencil case that can be left in school, please let us know. Please only send your child into school with their packed lunch and water, both of which should be disposable if possible. Classes have been rearranged to ensure the children are socially distanced.

EYFS

The current government guidelines will be particularly noticeable in the EYFS classroom. We have to strip out all soft furnishing and any items such as role play costumes, that cannot be safely and continually cleaned and wiped. We will be unable to allow reading books to be changed during this period. If all 15 Reception children start back on June 1st, we will split them into two bubbles.

School uniform

As the emphasis is on hygiene and cleanliness, during this time I feel it is important to relax usual rules on school uniform. The children may come into school in their school uniform or other sensible clothes. This is to ensure clothes are clean each day.

Hygiene

Hygiene is by far the most important issue and the best way we can keep the children as safe as possible. Therefore we will be ensuring they wash their hands at regular intervals. Toys and items used by the children will be regularly washed and sterilised. Throughout the day staff will be cleaning high touch points - such as banisters, door handles and taps. There will be a thorough clean every night and every morning. We will be rigorous in this regard.

Curriculum and home learning

The curriculum and school day will not operate as it did in March. Children will be encouraged to be out whenever possible (in their bubbles) as ventilation outside minimises risks. As all teachers will now be in school, they will not be available throughout the day to answer questions on home learning from Years 2- 5. Teachers will continue to upload work for those year groups. The Tytherington transition portal should go live on June 1st, as all high school transition this year will be virtual.

Parents entering school

We ask that you do not enter school but wait in the yard at the allocated time slot. We will not be allowing children to enter via the reception area at the front of school. Please email admin should you have an issue, and please make all school payments via the e-payments system.

Symptoms

Finally, if you or your child is displaying symptoms then you are expected to isolate and not send your child to school. Should your child show symptoms during the school day, we will isolate them with a member of staff and ask you to collect them from school as soon as possible. They will then need to isolate at home for 14 days.

It was not my intention to bombard you, but to give you clear information about how school will operate as soon as I could. Obviously the landscape is ever changing and this is the plan, based on the latest government guidelines.

I hope you continue to know how important our school family is to us all, and how much we miss you. We are putting these measures in place to give you reassurances and to follow the guidelines set out by the government. We want to ensure that we are minimising all risks and keeping the community as safe as we can.

With warmest wishes,

Mrs Walker.