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Friday 22nd May 2020

Letter to Parents/Legal Guardians of children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

Dear Parents/Legal Guardians,

As you know, since Monday 23rd March, we have only been able to open to specific groups of children, having to remain closed to a number of pupils since then.

The government are currently planning for schools to open to more children in addition to our current groups. We will be notified of their final decision on 28th May.

I have contacted Parents and Legal Guardians of children in these groups and as a school team we understand and respect all decisions that are made, as every family has to make their decisions based on their own personal circumstances. In Year 1 and Year 6, the overwhelming response was that Parents and Legal Guardians preferred their children to return to school. In Early Years, fewer parents wished to take up a place at this time.

Following this information gathering, staff and governors have met to discuss how we can safely accommodate more children on our school site whilst ensuring the best possible provision enabling children (and families) to feel safe and secure, not worried and anxious.

We have therefore decided the following schedule for our children using government guidance, our own knowledge of the children and our school site and following a stringent and comprehensive Risk Assessment using Northumberland County Council guidelines.

We have therefore decided to welcome our children back in phases which we will assess and review each week ensuring safety is paramount. Please see details below:

School Closure Monday 1st June

On Monday 1st June school will be closed to all pupils as the school site will have been used during the half term holiday and we need to deep clean and re-organise our school site into 'bubbles' or groups of children who will learn, play, eat and work together.

This will also enable us to ensure our desks and furnishings adhere to the social distancing guidelines whilst making the rooms as child friendly as possible.

School Organisation from June 2nd

We will re-open on Tuesday 2nd June to our Key Worker and specified groups of children already attending school. These children will be working in a mixed age 'bubble' with school staff. Please note every **WEDNESDAY** we will **close at 12 p.m.** to **ALL** pupils to enable the school site to be deep cleaned and to enable for staff to have planning and preparation time.

Headteacher: Mrs Belinda Athey

Our Key Worker children will use Class 3 and if needed Class 2 with another member of staff on busier days. These areas will remain for their exclusive use and only allocated staff and cleaning staff (cleaning staff will only clean when the children are not in the classroom). They will enter and exit using their own door and have sole access to handwashing/ sanitising and toilet facilities.

In addition to our children who have already been attending school on Tuesday 2nd June we will open to **Nursery and Reception children**. In the first instance there will be 8 children in total working with 2 members of staff in a very small 'bubble' of 4 children using their normal Early Years environment which will remain exclusively for their use. Only allocated staff and cleaning staff will be allowed to enter and leave (cleaning staff will only clean when the children are not in the classroom). They will enter and exit using their own door and have sole access to handwashing/sanitising and toilet facilities. Miss Dick, Miss Armstrong and Mrs Manners will be the dedicated staff team for these children. They will have safe access to outside points throughout the day.

This will be under constant review.

School Organisation from June 8th

In addition to the children who attended school last week, we also intend to open to **Year 1 pupils** this week. They will learn, work, eat and play in their own 'bubble' using Class 1 and the hall as their own 'bubble'. They will enter and exit using their own door, and have sole access to handwashing/ sanitising and toilet facilities. Miss Donkin and a teaching assistant (I am finalising which teaching assistants are staffing which 'bubbles' so will let you know prior to June 8th). They will have safe access to outside points throughout the day.

School Organisation from June 15th

Throughout the first 2 weeks of June I will be working extensively with school staff to assess and review the safety of pupils on the school site.

However, at this point in time, following government guidelines regarding which children should be in school firstly, we do not have enough space to accommodate all of the Year 6 pupils (this does not affect the Y6 pupils who have been attending school since March) safely in our school building.

Part time places for these children may be an option but is something that needs continued discussion at this point in time. Please be reassured that the children's safety is at the forefront of our mind as is the wish for the Year 6 children to have some time at our school before they continue their learning journey as Year 7's.

School Routines -

The Key Worker/ Other groups of children, Reception followed in phases by Year 1 and Year 6 children's school times will be-

Buses drop off staggered from 8.40a.m. – 8.55a.m. (school transport will be contacting you by letter).

8.55a.m. - Reception and Key Worker/other groups of children - Parents/Legal Guardians drop off point.

This will be easily identified with signage and markings and we will be using area outside the school gates and our staff carpark for this so as per guidelines we are limiting people on the school site.

Nursery Parents/Legal Guardians drop off will be 9.00 a.m. Once again there will be clear signage.

Please note Nursery children are asked to attend school 5 days per week with change of time –

9.00a.m. – 2p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. **WEDNESDAY'S** 11.30a.m. pick up.

This will ensure the Nursery children are picked up while the school site is quiet.

End of day arrangements-

Buses will pick up children at 3p.m. to enable us to take groups out whilst adhering to social distancing.

Please could parents therefore not come onto their allocated point until 3.10p.m. for a 3.15p.m. pick up.

School Lunches-

We will not be providing school lunches so please provide your child with a packed lunch, fruit or vegetable snack if required and water bottle(s). We will not be re-filling bottles at school and the water machine will be out of use to avoid any cross contamination. If possible, please provide a plastic packed lunch box or food bag. This will remain in your child's designated area and not be handled by anyone else. Please make sure that children can open food packets themselves so that we are not handling them. If your child receives Free School Meals they will still be entitled to the FSM vouchers provided by Edenred.

School Milk -

We will not be ordering school milk.

Uniform and Kit list -

We would like the children to wear school uniform as it will help encourage them to feel that they are back at school and ready to learn. We appreciate that children may have grown out of some items of uniform so there will be allowances made at this time, but we do encourage the children to wear clean clothes each day if possible. Please do ensure that your child has trainers with them. It may be beneficial for you to provide a change of clothes in your child's bag as we are unable to provide any changes of clothes from school, and if your child was unable to change into their own clothes, we would have to contact you to bring clothes to school. They should also have their own sun hat or cap as we cannot provide spares.

If your child is younger it is imperative that they have a complete change (s) of clothes including underwear or pull ups and wipes/ nappy sacks in their bag.

Please ensure that children come to school wearing sun cream.

Please could children bring the following items in a bag to be kept at school –

Change of clothes/ nappies etc if needed.

Packet of tissues with child's name on them.

Year 1 upwards -Pencil case, pencils, rubber, pencil sharpener, ruler – Please do not worry if you do not have these resources as school will provide a pack of essentials for your child to keep in school which will be labelled and not accessed by others.

Trainers – school cannot provide spares.

Please could your child bring to school each day –

Packed lunch, jacket, sunhat/cap, water bottles, Fruit or vegetable snack if required

School Office –

Please help us to keep each other safe by contacting the office through email wherever possible. Please try to avoid any changes to end of day arrangements. If you do need to contact school by phone, please note that the school office is manned remotely and that staff on site will pick up messages throughout the day.

PPE -

School staff have been given the option to wear PPE and will do this if they need to change nappies or administer first aid. If staff decide at a later point to wear PPE more regularly, we will let you know so that you can discuss this with your child. Following NCC guidelines we ask that children do not wear PPE, in particular home-made masks.

Online Learning –

Thank you for your questionnaire responses. We will be using them to ensure that for the children not attending school their learning is the best it can be during this difficult time.

Keeping in touch phone calls –

Thank you for your wonderful feedback about these calls.

The Early Years team will be in school full time from June 2nd. Therefore they will keep in touch via Tapestry.

School staff will be continuing phone calls for Year 2,3,4,5 and 6 after half term. You are very welcome to email me directly if you have any queries or concerns or good news to share:

Belinda.athey@whittingham.northumberland.sch.uk.

If your child is ill and COVID 19 -

Please do not send your child into school if they are unwell in any way. If they are not going to be in school, please contact the school office. If your child displays COVID 19 symptoms please contact school immediately. You will then be able to access a test. Please do not come into school until the results are known and a negative result is given.

If your child displays symptoms at school, we would need to isolate them (the school library is being used for this purpose) and a member of staff would contact you to pick up your child. Your child would wait with a member of staff wearing full PPE. We would then contact all parents and arrange for school to close to enable a deep clean to be carried out.

Finally, I would like to say a big THANK YOU to the amazing staff team who have been working hard to ensure that the children who have attended school have remained safe, well and most of all happy and we will continue to care for your children as they return to school. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your ongoing support; it's really appreciated during these tricky times.

Best wishes,

Belinda Athey, Headteacher.