
NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

The Federation of Longhorsley and Whalton Church of England Aided Schools

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21st May 2020

Dear Parents,

We are now in a position to share with you our plans for the potential re-opening of BOTH schools from 1st June for the Government's identified year groups, which are Nursery (Longhorsley only), Reception (Longhorsley and Whalton), Year 1 (Longhorsley and Whalton) and Year 6 (Whalton only).

As you are aware, the Government has published many guidance documents for all schools to follow; the link for the parents' guide was included in one of my previous letters to you. We have used all of the guidance documents and the local authority's risk assessment to come up with a personalised plan for each school so that practical control measures from our risk assessments are put in place to ensure the safety of all children and staff as much as we can in the current climate.

The first thing to say is that the ethos of both schools has not changed, the children will be welcomed enthusiastically and staff will always ensure that their welfare is at the forefront of all that we do. Our Christian values of honesty, hope, trust, friendship, forgiveness and most importantly love will still shine through everything we do, but within the restrictions and constrictions that we have to keep to, to ensure that everyone is kept as safe as possible.

In order to make this happen we will have:

- a staggered arrival and leaving time for each group of children (older siblings will arrive and leave at the youngest siblings' times)
- a rota for breaks so that only a limited group are at play at any one time or spaced out in their own section of the playground/field
- a team of two staff for every group of children who then stays with them for the whole day, including break time and when eating lunch where possible
- children entering and leaving the classroom in their own groups and only with children from this group, even outside as they will keep to their own section
- separate entrances for different groups of children or different times
- identified walkways for different groups of children into school (mainly Whalton)
- additional cleaning at break time and lunchtime, in addition to caretaker cleaning every morning and evening



The main thing that we have been told and you know from all of the government updates is that we need to make sure that children and teachers keep a safe distance from each other... so children from Reception upwards will be sitting at the same desks everyday in the same room - at a two metre distance apart from each other.

So what can you do to help us get the children ready for this?

- Please prepare your children for the fact that school will not look the same in the fact that they will have their own special area/classroom which they will need to stay in, their own entrance, their own teachers who will work with them, look after them and have fun with (we have tried to keep year group teachers with their classes as best we can) but they will not be using any other room as everyone needs to have their own safe space
- Let them know that they will not be using the cloakrooms but will take their coats into the classrooms with them and put them on the back of their chairs - so please make sure that they are named clearly
- That they need to bring with them their own special pencil case into school to leave on their own table with their water bottle - all clearly named (it will not be possible to borrow pencils for example, from the school or other children and water bottles will need to go home to be washed and re-filled at the end of the day)
- That no bags are allowed at all in school
- That they need to wear their own clothes but that they must be suitable for doing PE in and going outside (please remember that they must be able to put on their own shoes - no laces if they can't tie them)
- That they need to bring their own sunhat and come wearing sunscreen
- That they need to change the clothes that they wear to go to school in everyday
- That they will continue to do lots of handwashing and will need to have their hands sanitised on the way in to school
- That they can still go to the toilet but that not all toilets or hand basins will be in use and that their teachers will help make sure that the correct number of children are in there at the same time
- That lunch will be served in a packed bag and brought to their classroom for them, it could be quiche or baguettes or sandwiches with fruit and biscuits and that everybody will get a school packed bag lunch
- That only one parent can bring them into school and that they will say goodbye to you at the gate or special entrance in the playground (Whalton) and be met by Mrs Brannen, Mrs Elliott or Mrs Campbell first
- That if they fall down or hurt themselves and they need help with a cut, that we will help as best we can using our first aid table for them to get a wipe or plaster but if they need more help then we might need to put gloves, apron and a mask on
- That you do not send them into school if they have any symptoms of a cough, sneeze or high temperature (see link below for further details)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

- That there will be a special room that they will go to on their own if they do have a cough, sneeze or high temperature where someone will look after them but that person might look like the nurses and doctors on television with an apron, mask and gloves on to protect them
- That all of the staff at the school want what is the very best for them and that Mrs Brannen's job is to keep everybody safe, including the adults at both schools

For you personally as parents:

- That you will need to stick to the staggered times in order for the social distancing to work
- To please park away from the school gate and leave it clear, so that all parents have the necessary space to social distance
- That if you need to discuss something with a member of staff, please ring the school and make an appointment for a telephone call or send us an email using the school's admin email address: longhorsleyadmin@fedlongwhaltschools.uk or whaltonadmin@fedlongwhaltschools.uk

So what now?

Now that you know what measures will be in place, please can you confirm whether you want a place for your child on our google form attached. We have limited capacity due to the sizes of our rooms and may have to prioritise children according to groups. Guaranteed places go to the Critical Workers' children and to the vulnerable children and then to Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. We will then send you the details of confirmation of your child's place with the timings and arrangements for your child's group. For our new Nursery children at Longhorsley, it is not the start that we would wish for your children; the environment is stripped back and the staffing will be different as Miss Thompson will be with Reception in another room. We will only be offering morning sessions to all Nursery due to the need to disinfect any toys that have been played with for the next day. We definitely cannot guarantee social distancing in the Early Years classroom, so please bear that in mind when making the decision for your children.

Due to the need to deep clean both schools and to give all staff a chance to prepare for the weeks ahead, **neither Whalton nor Longhorsley will be open during the half term holiday next week.**

In terms of start days, it is very important that each group of children gets the chance to get familiar with the systems set up in each school and that we can review our risk assessments in between different groups of children starting back. So the following groups will start back on the following days from Monday 1st June as long as the government has confirmed it is safe to do so:

Longhorsley:

Monday 1st June	8.30 - 3.15	Children of critical workers and any children classed as vulnerable (within the vulnerable group as identified by the government) in Years 2,3,4
Wednesday 3rd June	8.45 - 11.45	Nursery children
Wednesday 3rd June	9.15 - 3.00	Reception children
Friday 5th June	9.00 - 3.30	Year 1 children

Whalton:

Monday 1st June	8.30 - 3.15	Children of critical workers and any children classed as vulnerable in Years 2,3,4,5.
Tuesday 2nd June	8.45 - 3.00	Reception and Year 1 children.
Thursday 4th June	9.00 - 3.30	Year 6 children

After that, all groups will begin to come in at their staggered times daily from Monday 8th June at both schools.

Balancing home learning and teaching in schools

You will appreciate that if the staff are all in school, that they cannot possibly continue to give the same attention to home learning as previously. To this end, and to ensure that all children are given the same opportunities, we will be preparing booklets for all year groups for maths and English which children can do both at home and in school. We will print these out on a weekly basis and then arrange a specific day and time when these can be picked up from outside of each school. Staff will continue to set topic work for the afternoons online but no work will be submitted to be marked. White Rose Maths will continue to be set as part of the booklet so that you can continue to use the video clips that you have found so helpful. For any family's self-isolating, we can also e-mail the booklets through. Staff will be offering a weekly phone call home to our home learning children just to check in to see how things are going and to see if we can support in any other way.

Looking ahead?

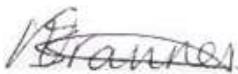
At this moment in time, we are concentrating on keeping the children we have coming into school safe, there will be no planned events taking place; although of course we will keep in mind our end of year leavers and what we can do to support them. By now, you should all have received a letter either from your middle school or high school outlining their transition plans. We will review our position in line with scientific and government guidelines in the coming weeks with regard to further year groups returning to school but in the meantime, we look forward to welcoming back those children whose parents would like them to return.

I cannot emphasise enough how much we appreciate your continued support and how well you have responded to our home learning and support from the staff. Everybody at the Federation has been working so hard, especially behind the scenes, and we have received such lovely emails of appreciation - so thank you. We are in this together and I cannot thank my staff team enough for their flexibility, resilience and desire to be the very best that they can be for your children, and the Governing Body, especially Mr Truscott, our Chair of Governors, for all of their support during this very surreal and unsettling time.

As always, if you have any further questions, please contact me either at Longhorsley or Walton or through the admin email addresses. Please do complete the google form once again and we will be in touch regarding places and timings.

Please do stay alert and safe.

Kind regards



Mrs N Brannen
Executive Headteacher