

Tuesday 26th May 2020

For the attention of ALL Parents and Carers

### **Arrangements for the possible wider opening of schools from 1<sup>st</sup> June**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have now undertaken a very thorough risk assessment to prepare for the possible phased further opening of school from the 1<sup>st</sup> June. It is important to note that this is not yet confirmed and we may not know the definite position until the end of this week. I appreciate that this is unsettling and leaves you and your child without a clear picture of what will be happening, but it is important that we fully consider all the latest advice (which is up-dated on a daily basis) and we make sure that we do not start opening to more children until it is safe to do so. As you can probably imagine, this is not something I take lightly as Headteacher, and it is a cause of considerable anxiety for our staff who miss the children very much and want the very best for them, but above all have their own personal concerns for the safety of their families and themselves.

Please read this letter carefully. If we do extend our opening arrangements from the 1<sup>st</sup> June, or at a later date, you will need this information. The letter is quite long but contains all the details you need to understand how school will be operating. Our first priority will be to keep everyone here, and our wider family community, safe –and there is a great deal of conflicting information in the media on this point. My approach at the moment, and subject to further guidance from the Government, WSCC and the views of our governors, is to be cautious. These are very early days in the recovery process.

The Government have asked us to prioritise places in school for children of keyworkers, and those in vulnerable groups. At the moment we have 2 groups, which are almost full, and we need to have capacity to increase this if more keyworkers ask for a place. We will therefore base our plans on 3 groups of keyworker children from the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

**So, at this stage, the year groups we are looking to welcome back are Years R and 1.** If these arrangements work well, and we have both the staff and space available, we will review this during week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> June with the possibility of opening for Year 6 children from 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Provision would be similar to Year R and 1 and based on two days a week in school with the class split into 2 groups. I am sending this letter to everyone now so that all parents have an understanding of our arrangements and how this might impact on them and their child.

As I mentioned in my email at the start of last week, the safety and well-being of the children and the staff is our biggest priority. All the measures we are adopting aim to minimise the risks associated with the coronavirus and to manage these in the very best way we can. We are really keen to get all the children back to school, but this is not possible at the moment.

The Government have provided us with detailed guidelines and set clear expectations for which year groups we should re-open for first and how this might be done safely. Our school specific risk assessment is based on these guidelines and those of the Local Authority. We have looked carefully at the space we have in school and the numbers of

teachers and support staff who are available (i.e. not currently self-isolating). I have also worked closely with Ian Lomax and Clare Few, our Co-Chairs of Governors, in drawing up the risk assessment and planning for wider opening. Staff, parents and other members of the Governing Body have been consulted. The feedback received has been considered and acted upon in light of the broader plan.

The staff team here have worked extremely hard to support children in school and also to provide home learning, as well as keeping in touch with everyone by email and phone. Thank you for the wonderful feedback we have received about this, it really is helping us through this challenging time.

### **Keyworkers**

Keyworkers continue to be eligible for a place, but because of the limit of 15 in any one group of children, we do need to manage this more carefully now. Ideally you will be able to advise us of a regular pattern of attendance. Even if your child is in Year R or 1, they will be part of their keyworker group for any day you have asked for provision. This is to ensure that we keep social mixing to a minimum and has been a key point discussed amongst the staff. Moving children between their year group class and their keyworker group was seen to increase the risks of transmission of the virus and at this stage was not considered to be the safest option.

If you are a keyworker and have not yet asked for cover but are now needing this, please contact the office in the first instance. Please do not just 'turn up' as we need to plan our groups and the numbers vary day to day. We will be able to accommodate you but ask that you give us at least 2 working days' notice.

### **Year Group arrangements**

Mr Neaves has been in touch with all families in Years R and 1 to find out if parents wanted their child to come back to school. Mr Neaves has also contacted Year 6 parents so we have that information to act on if we are later able to open to Year 6 as well. Based on these numbers, each class will be split into 2 groups (bubbles). The teachers will bear in mind friendships in deciding the groups, but there are other factors we have to also consider, so it is unlikely to be possible to change groups once they are arranged.

Children will attend on either Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday, the teachers will have their planning time and prepare work for those not in school, and the classroom and resources will be thoroughly cleaned. Regular cleaning will also take place as normal and additional surfaces cleaned throughout the day.

### **Staff**

Staff will be assigned to one group of children at a time. Apart from those in keyworker groups, children in Years R and 1 will be taught by their own teacher (subject to staff

absence due to sickness). There will also be a TA assigned to each group. Where possible, this will be the class's normal TA. The teacher and TA will cover breaks between them, and a member of staff will also be assigned to that group for lunchtime.

**Staggered start and finish times** – dropping off and picking up will be via external doors and parents need to stand back and keep 2 m apart. For those children coming back, you will receive another email detailing which doors to bring your child to / collect them from.

To reduce the numbers of people on site at any one time, there will be staggered start and finish times.

Year R – start at 9.15 and finish at 2.45. (gate will open at 2.40pm)

Year 1 – start at 9.00 and finish at 3.00.

Keyworker children start from 8.30 and finish at 3.15 as they do now, but you won't be able to pick children up early as we need to manage the flow of people on and off the site. You will also receive another email directing you to where to drop off / collect your child from June 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Children in the same family in different groups** - We will contact families with children in more than one group to agree a mutually convenient time to drop off and pick up all your children.

**Please do not arrive at other times as there may not be anyone available to supervise the children and we need to avoid anyone having to wait in the playground or anywhere on site to come into school. Year 6 children arriving or leaving school on their own must also adhere to these times.**

**Children should be dropped off and picked up by one parent only.** If it is possible not to bring other siblings this would be preferable. If this is unavoidable, younger siblings should be in a pushchair or carried. Older siblings should remain with the parent and walk calmly at all times.

Parents must leave the site quickly and should not stop at any point for a 'chat'. This includes the areas around the gates both on site and immediately outside, so that these are clear for other people. The gates will be locked promptly at 9.30 am and later at 3.30pm to reduce movement around the site.

**Year 6 pupils** should say goodbye to their parent at the gate and walk calmly into school following the one-way system (if entering from the back gate).

Most children will enter and exit their classroom through the classroom outer door in a similar way to the week before lockdown. We will provide those coming in with that information in a separate short email. Parents will not be allowed to enter the Year R play area, or the building, and should say goodbye quickly to avoid too much congestion in this area. Please explain this in advance so that children know what to expect.

If any child is nervous and is reluctant to come in, we will not be able to assist as we normally do. To avoid upsetting others or preventing other children accessing school, please take your child home, reassure them and try again the next day.

**PLEASE NOTE – the outdoor play equipment, including trim trails and the school fields, are currently out of bounds and must not be used by anyone.**

### **Gate one-way system**

We will be operating a one-way system from the back gate – please walk towards school on the path and back to the gate on the grass to the right hand side of the trees. The ground is currently firm, so we do not anticipate this causing a difficulty.

We had considered a one way system through the school site from the back gate to the front but felt this could cause some logistical difficulties for parents and the front gate will be busy with children being dropped off for St Anthonys. Parents should be aware that St Anthonys expect to have many more minibuses than normal, so if it is possible to use our back gate that would reduce congestion at the front entrance.

There will be members of staff outside to help if you are not sure where to go.

Government guidelines currently discourage the use of public transport and we ask that you follow these guidelines.

### **Social distancing**

Everyone on the school site (staff, parents and children) will be expected to follow strict social distancing guidelines. All adults should maintain a distance of 2m from others and children firmly supported to do the same. We will be focusing a lot of attention on helping children to learn these principles so that they become firmly embedded.

In classrooms it may be difficult for the younger children to maintain individual social distancing, and the Government guidelines recognise this. This is one of the main purposes of group ‘bubbles’ which reduces social contacts as much as practically possible in the school context.

Please remember that the virus can be transmitted at any time, so we ask that you follow the social distancing and hand washing guidelines at all times to reduce the possibility of transmission between home (where you may come into contact with others outside your family group) and school.

### **Handwashing**

We have a good stock of handwash and sanitizer gel in school, as well as anti-bac cleaning materials. Children will be asked to use hand gel or wash their hands as a

minimum on entering / leaving the classroom at the start and end of the day, before and after break, at lunchtime and after using the toilet. All adults will follow the same routine.

If your child's hands become sore, you may want to ensure they use moisturising hand cream at home. This should only be brought to school if absolutely necessary and the child is able to self-administer it. This will not be appropriate to any child in Keystage 1 or Year R. Any medical concerns about this should be discussed with the office, either by email or phone.

## **Lunchtimes**

**Hot meals** will be provided to all children attending, and there will be no cost to parents whilst schools remain partially closed. We will order the meals, and the office will ask you if your child will want a meal or not.

Years R, 1 and younger Keyworker children will eat their lunch in the hall a group at a time. All other groups will eat in their classrooms. Staff will serve the meals to children so that there is no queuing and to reduce movement around school.

**Packed Lunch** – you may send your child with a packed lunch. Please do not send chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks. The lunch box should ideally be a plastic one to reduce the likelihood of virus transmission.

**Water Bottles** – all children must bring in a water bottle containing water (no juice or squash). The water fountains will not be in use and, other than in an emergency, we will not be able to provide a drink. Children having a hot dinner will have a drink available to them at this time.

## **Clothes / Uniform**

Children will not be able to change in school for PE, so they should wear clothes suitable for physical activity, rather than their school uniform. This includes trainers. **If your child is not able to tie their own laces they must wear slip on or Velcro shoes so that they can manage this independently if the laces come undone.**

Children may bring a coat if they need one, but no additional clothing should be brought into school other than a named sun hat if the weather requires one.

Coats will be hung over the child's own chair. Cloakrooms will not be in use. Year R will have slightly different arrangements as it is unlikely coats or jumpers would stay in place on chairs.

Long hair should be tied back securely.

It is recommended if possible that children wear fresh clothes each day, again to reduce the possibility of the virus being transferred via clothing.

**Change of clothes for younger children** – we will continue to assist children if they need to change but to avoid the use of too much school spare clothing please send a bag of spare clothes into school to keep here for the time being. If it is used, we will send the clothes for washing home and ask that a new spare set is sent in the next day.

**PPE / facemasks** – the Government guidelines are that children should not wear PPE in school. If you choose to ask your child to wear a facemask on the way into school, parents should please remove it and take it home with them and not leave it with their child. Older children arriving without a parent will be asked to put this away during the day. Facemasks can hold viruses and if not used in the appropriate way can transmit virus to other surfaces.

### **Rucksacks, Bags, Book bags, toys, pencil cases etc.**

No bags, book bags or home toys will be allowed in school. This is to reduce the possibility of the transfer of viruses from home to school, and between children in school.

PE kits will not be required and should not be brought in.

**Pencil cases** – pencils etc. will be provided in school for each individual. Where there is a possibility of sharing e.g. in Years R and 1, the pencils will be sterilised at the end of each day / activity in Milton or similar. Year 6 children may bring a small, non-fluffy or material (e.g. a metal or vinyl) pencil case containing a small amount of pencils / pens etc. These will be kept on their individual table and must not be shared with anyone else.

### **Reading books**

During this phase of re-opening, we will not be sending home reading books or exchanging any. If you have some at home, please keep them there for the time being. Children will be undertaking reading activities in school and will have access to a small number of books, but the library will not be in use.

### **Children who are ill or showing symptoms of CV-19**

**If your child complains of being unwell in any way, in the morning at home or on the way to school, please keep them at home for 48 hours or until they feel well again.** This is because there are more possible symptoms being identified and children may find it difficult to say how they feel when unwell.

If your child or any member of your household is experiencing any symptoms of CV-19 (please make sure you are familiar with these by checking the NHS website) you should all self-isolate at home and parents should arrange a test for those affected. Details can

be found on the NHS website. If you all test negative, your child may return. If there is a positive test, they should remain at home for the period of time recommended by government guidelines current at the time. If you need any assistance with this, please contact the office.

**If your child becomes unwell in any way at school, you will be contacted and asked to collect them immediately.** Please make sure you, or an adult member of your household, is available to do this at all times whilst your child is in school.

If a child displays symptoms of CV-19 they will be asked to sit away from other children and adults awaiting your arrival. If they need support from an adult, the adult will wear PPE. This will apply to an adult becoming unwell too.

### **Behaviour Expectations**

An additional appendix to our Behaviour Policy has been drawn up to cover the current situation. You will find this attached to the same email as this letter. Please be aware that if, after guidance and support, any child is not able to follow social distancing measures you will be asked to keep them at home. This is for the safety and well-being of the other children and staff. Please discuss this with your child before they come back to school.

### **Contact and Communication with school**

School is closed to all parents and visitors. If you need to contact us, please do so by emailing or phoning the office [office@jys.org.uk](mailto:office@jys.org.uk) or 01243 782192.

Teachers will only be able to liaise with you in this way. For staff and other parents' safety, please don't try to engage anyone in conversation at the beginning or end of the day at the classroom door. I know everyone is missing each other and is desperate for a 'chat' but this makes social distancing very difficult, and for now this must be avoided.

### **School Events**

Sadly, there will be no school events until at least the Autumn. We will keep you posted on this. We will arrange an evening event for Year 6 in the autumn once restrictions are lifted to properly say 'Goodbye'.

### **Transition and new Year R intake**

We will undertake transition for our current Years R – 5 in the autumn, if it is not possible to do anything this term, and we will have different arrangements for the intake of new children to Year R in September. Further details about this will follow in due course.

## **INSET days**

Just a reminder that we have two INSET days arranged for Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September.

Whilst I appreciate for many of you school has been closed, all the staff have continued to work all the time including holidays during this period and this has involved many changes to our internal arrangements and procedures. We will need time after the summer holidays to 're-group' and make sure we can respond to whatever the guidelines are then. We know CV-19 is with us for some time and we will need to address that at the start of September once all staff are back from holiday.

## **Further closure of school**

If we have an outbreak of CV-19 or a number of staff or children who test positive this may require us to partially or fully close the school. We will maintain the usual arrangements for doing this via Parentmail and on the school's website.

If any of these arrangements change in response to our on-going risk assessment or revised guidelines changes, I will let you know as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to get in touch via email or phone.

Please take care everyone and we all look forward to seeing you when it is safe for you to return.

Mrs Sadler, Headteacher