



20th May 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. Apologies for the length of the letter but I wanted to ensure I informed you as clearly as I can as to the steps we are / will take to keep your children safe when they are at school with us. I have used the government guidance and risk assessments in order to help us decide on these steps. In doing this, I have had to make some difficult decisions in how our schools will operate over the coming weeks. As always, the decisions that I have made have had the best interests of our whole federation communities at heart, the children, their families, the staff and their families.

As the situation changes our plans will need to be adjusted along the way and, when appropriate, we will keep you informed of these changes.

I would like to firstly take an opportunity to remind parents that we will put the following measures in place and staff will ensure that regular hand washing and increased cleaning will happen in school. However, as the head teacher of our schools, I need parents to know that although we will endeavor to socially distance, we are unable to guarantee it when the children are in school.

Survey Results

Again, many thanks for your responses to the survey. I received a reply from all our families which has helped to plan our potential phased return to school in June. Firstly across the Federation we received the following responses –

	The Acorn Federation	LLPS	MMPS
I would be happy to send my child / children back to school	39%	36%	42%
I am at present unsure how I feel about children returning to school and would need more information	33%	30%	35%
My child / children would not be returning to school	28%	33%	23%

In your responses to the survey many of you raised concerns or asked questions. I have answered these within the information provided below.

How will we group the children?

Initially the government have prioritised children in Reception, Year One and Year Six in the first phase of the wider opening of schools. At this time siblings in other year groups will not be returning to school, unless you are a critical worker. In planning our return to school on 1st June I have used the responses we received, consider our staffing levels and the space we have available to us.

The guidance from the government states that one of the protective measures schools need to take to reduce transmission is to have smaller group and class sizes. In these small groups we are to try and ensure children and staff, where possible, do not mix with other groups. Bearing this in mind our initial plan, based on the information shared above is to work in the following way, -

LLPS Garden Class Reception and Year 1 children will work at **LLPS** with either Mrs Sharpe or Mrs Reeve. Mrs Keeling will also support the children.

MMPS Garden Class Reception and Year 1 children will work at **MMPS** with Miss Harris and Mrs Thomson.



LLPS AND MMPS Meadow Class Year 6 children will work at **MMPS** with Mrs McManus and Mrs Thomas.

Critical Worker Children (in Y2, Y3, Y4 and Y5) will work at **MMPS** with Mrs Coppen and, at times, Mrs Pointon.

During this time I will spend the majority of my time at LLPS, due to staffing levels. I will visit MMPS and see the children from a safe distance. If you need to speak to me please either ring me at LLPS (01332 824339) or send me an email (headteacher@marstonmontgomery.derbyshire.sch.uk).

The children will spend all their time in these groups. We will limit the 'mixing' of children and staff in different groups as much as we can. As the situation changes we will review these arrangements and amend them as necessary, always keeping the government guidance in mind and the safety of our whole school community.

Uniform

Children will not wear uniform, they will be able to wear their 'home' clothes. **Children and staff will be expected to wash their clothes at the end of each day.** The children will need to wear clothing suitable for playing outside and taking part in sporting activities.

Before and After School Club

Unfortunately, we will be unable to offer any before or after school provision from 1st June because of the need to avoid mixing groups of children. I appreciate just how difficult this makes it for parents but can't see a way round it at this point. This will be reviewed over time.

Drop off and Collection of children at Marston

Children will have staggered arrival and collection times. When dropping your child(ren) off please respect the 2m rule. Parents **will not be allowed in the school building.** If you need to speak to a member of staff please ask to see them and they will come to you. The final plan for this staggered start and end to the day will be decided once we have final figures.

Garden Class children will arrive and leave through the door from the playground.

Meadow Class children will arrive and leave through the classroom door into the playground.

Critical Worker children will arrive and leave through the front door.

Drop off and Collection of Children at Long Lane

Children will have staggered arrival and collection times and will arrive through the double gate, next to the layby on Long Lane. When dropping your child(ren) off please respect the 2m rule. Parents **will not be allowed in the school building.** If you need to speak to a member of staff please ask to see them and they will come to you. The final plan for this staggered start and end to the day will be decided once we have final figures.

Arrival at School

Only one parent should attend school to drop off or collect their child. If possible, other siblings should stay at home. When this is not possible they must remain in the car.

Upon arrival at school, parents will be asked if their child, or anyone in their household has a fever, a new continuous cough or loss of taste and smell. If this is the case we will ask you to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance](#) (which states that the ill person should remain in isolation for 7 days and the rest of the household in isolation for 14 days).



The safety and wellbeing of all our children and their families, and our staff and their families, is our top priority. Therefore, we will also take the temperature of all children and staff upon arrival at school, using a non-contact infrared thermometer. Staff will hold the thermometer with a straight arm to do this.

The below statement is taken from the – [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection: Updated 18 May 2020](#)

'Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you should self-isolate at home.'

We do not always realise that we have a high temperature, particularly in children. Testing the temperature of children and staff who enter the school building will confirm if the child or adult is safe to enter and limit the risk of infection.

Anyone with a temperature of 37.9C or above will need to go home as will any of their siblings.

All children and staff will wash their hands immediately upon entering the building. Children will be supervised when washing their hands.

Lunchtime

The children will eat in their classrooms. Before and after lunch, staff will wipe the tables using an appropriate disinfectant. Staff working with the children in their 'bubble' will serve their lunch in the classroom. School dinners will still be available for children at both schools.

Time Outside

Children will access outdoor spaces in their 'bubbles'. They will be reminded prior to going outside of social distancing but will be allowed to run around the outdoor space freely so may at times come in close contact with other children.

At MMPS, where there are several groups, time outside will be allocated so that only one group is outside at a time.

Daily Procedures

The following procedures will be in place, -

- Regular, supervised hand washing throughout the day – upon arrival, before and after eating, after sneezing, before and after going outside
- Good hygiene practice – tissues will be placed in a bin with a lid after use. Bins will be emptied at 12pm as well as at the end of the day
- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned regularly (e.g. toys, books, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters). This will happen at any time the children go outside for break / outdoor learning and when children rotate activities in the classroom.
- At the end of the day, both schools, in particular the areas used during the day, will be thoroughly cleaned.
- Children will be encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose. Please reinforce this at home.
- External doors and windows will be opened to ensure rooms are well ventilated.
- Internal doors will be propped open to limit touching of door handles.



- Staff will look at children's work when they are not there and give a verbal comment to children to write in their book to minimise touching.

First Aid and Sun Cream

Please apply sun cream to your child(ren) prior to arrival at school.

If necessary staff will administer first aid, this will obviously be at close proximity, using necessary PPE, e.g. gloves.

Home Learning and Learning in School

Teaching staff will continue to provide learning at home for those children who do not return to school.

They will also continue to respond to emails from parents regarding this work. Due to the fact that staff will now be teaching this will not be as prompt as it has been previously. Staff will aim to respond within 24 hours but this may not always be possible. Teachers will use the same plan provided for home learning for their lessons in class. They will tailor it to suit the individual needs of the children in school.

Initially when children return to school all staff will support pupils to adjust to the way school now looks and will focus on PSHE activities. We ask parents to also talk to their children about the changes to the school day we are making prior to their return.

Critical Worker children (in Y2, Y3, Y4 and Y5) will continue to complete a few pages each day from each of their work books.

Classrooms

In order to prepare our classrooms we will be taking the following steps, -

- All unnecessary items will be removed from the classroom and stored elsewhere.
- We will remove soft furnishings e.g. padded chairs / cushions / blankets / rugs.
- All soft toys and toys which are difficult to clean will be put away.
- If children need to use equipment (e.g. Numicon) to support their learning we will have a set for each child – this will then be cleaned prior to being put away. Where there are not sufficient resources to share, the children will take it in turns to use them and they will be washed in between.
- As far as is possible we will arrange tables so that children are sitting 2 meters apart.
- The children will sit at the same table every day.
- In the Garden Class we will consider the toys we put out. We will use toys that are easy to clean and will aim to limit children's interaction when playing with equipment. Children will access table top activities or floor based activities alongside other children in their 'bubble', however we will seek to limit this to a small number (3 to 4 children) working within close proximity.

Equipment

- The children **will not** bring anything to school with them.
- The work books we provided will need to return to school on their first day and will then stay in school.
- The children will be provided with their own individual set of stationary which only they will use.
- The children will be provided with a named beaker for drinking water, they **will not** bring their water bottles to school.
- Each group will have a jug with water to refill the beakers. Staff will pour the water for the children.
- A selection of reading books will be available in the classrooms, these **will not** be taken home. Parents should continue to access Oxford Reading Owl for reading books at home.

Toilets at MMPS

Staff from each bubble will only send one child to the toilet at a time. The corridor will have a one way system in place that will involve going outside. This will be sign-posted so that it is clear to the children.

Meadow Class – will use the staff toilet.



Critical Worker Children – will use the girl's toilet.

Garden Class – will use the boy's toilet.

Staff Toilet – staff will use the Bluebell room toilet.

Toilets at LLPS

Staff in the Garden Class will ensure only one child uses the toilet at a time by only allowing one child to go at a time.

Those displaying symptoms

Children and staff **should not attend** school if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus.

If a child becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while at school they will be taken out of their 'bubble group' with one of the adults and their parents will be contacted immediately. At MMPS they will wait in Mrs Bosley's office and use the staff toilet. At LLPS they will wait in the school office and use the office toilet.

The government guidance says that if a child has symptoms, a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.

In this situation, the child or adult displaying symptoms will be asked to self-isolate for 7 days. Members of their household should self-isolate for 14 days. This is a useful diagram as to how self-isolation in a household should happen -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874011/Stay_at_home_guidance_diagram.pdf

A confirmed case

Where a child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their 'bubble' 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 develops symptoms.

Testing for COVID-19 – Everyone over the age of 5 now eligible for testing!

When settings open to the wider cohort of children, all those children eligible to attend, and members of their households, will have access to testing if they display symptoms of coronavirus. Staff in school are already eligible for a test if they display symptoms. Parents will be able to access testing by calling 111 or by using the following link - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

However, even with a negative test result those still showing symptoms will have to remain in isolation to protect the wider school community.

Shielded and Clinically Vulnerable children

The government guidance states the following, -

'For the vast majority of children and young people, coronavirus is a mild illness. Children and young people (0 to 18 years of age) who have been [classified as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions](#) have been advised to shield. We do not expect these children to be attending school or college, and they should continue to be supported at home as much as possible. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A small minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.'



Opening schools during summer to enable parents to work.

A parent asked if schools would be opening during the summer holiday to enable parents to work.

Since 23rd March, school staff have been working on a rota system to provide essential child care for children whose parents are key workers. School was open for this during the two week Easter holiday and will also be open during the May half term.

When not in school, teaching staff are preparing home learning resources and responding to parent emails for support / advice on further activities to support the learning of our children. In addition to this work, they are also working on developing curriculum areas.

Across the Federation we are extremely lucky that all staff have been willing to work during the holidays. At the present time the **Government has no plans to open schools during the summer holiday so that parents can work.**

I am aware that the present situation will have led to some financial strain for many families. If you believe you would now be entitled to Free School Meals please contact myself, Mrs Lovett, Mrs Murby or Mrs Watts and we can contact Derbyshire to find out if this is the case. I would also be able to sign-post you to external sources of available support.

Parents at LLPS please use enquiries@longlane.derbyshire.sch.uk to contact the office.

Parents at MMPS please use info@marstonmontgomery.derbyshire.sch.uk to contact the office.

What are the plans for the next academic year?

A parent asked what would happen next year and whether children will repeat a year. As yet the government have not made an announcement as to what will happen in September and whether or not children will repeat this year or move into the next year. Whatever happens, all our children will be in the same situation.

For parents with child(ren) in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, I hope that this has given you the information you need to decide whether or not you will send your child(ren) to school when we reopen. **This is a personal decision that families will need to make for themselves.** Our situations as families are all different and you will all need to make the decision that is right for your individual circumstances. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

I will telephone parents with children in **Reception, Year 1, Year 6** and **critical workers** on Thursday afternoon and Friday to confirm whether or not their child(ren) will be returning to school.

Apologies again for the length of the letter. Congratulations for making it to the end!

Best wishes

Teresa Bosley
Head Teacher