

RE: Arrangements for school reopening – Keyworkers, Vulnerable, EYFS (Reception) and Year One ONLY

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you and your families are well and have had a good half term week. We have been very busy organising and planning the extended provision for the eligible groups.

As you are aware from the 8th June we intend to extend our school provision to Reception and Year 1 children in the first phase.

This letter is intended to give you more information about the return for these year groups. The following arrangements have been put in place following a huge amount of consideration, discussion, planning, adhering to guidance and a robust risk assessment process.

Whilst we are looking forward to seeing all the children once again, we would like to reassure you that the safety of our school community is our top priority. As I am sure you can appreciate the provision which we will offer will be very different due to the guidance and risk assessments that we have put in place for the safety of our pupils, families, staff and the wider community.

We recognise that some of you may have some concerns about your child returning to school. **We want to remind you that at this time, the government has said no parents will be prosecuted for not sending their child to school.** The choice for your child to return to school is **your choice**. We will minimise the risk to the children and staff as much as humanely possible but you need to be aware that there will be **an element of risk**. We can only do so much to help reduce the risks but you need to be clear that it is **not without risk**. You need to make an informed choice as to whether you send your child, knowing that there is a potential risk, and keep this at the forefront of your mind when deciding what you would like to do.

We need to be honest with you and make you aware that whatever we do - as leaders, Governors, teachers, support staff - to change the physical space, reduce numbers of pupils, carry out detailed risk assessments to try and limit the risk, we cannot guarantee that the risk of catching the virus will be removed. We also cannot guarantee that the children will socially distance from each other and therefore we need to be open with you. We are not trying to scaremonger but it is our duty to be open and honest with you so you can make your choice based on the information you are given. A summary of the school's risk assessments have also been attached to this email for you to see the actions we have put in place. Although these measures are put in place to

reduce the risk, there will still be an element of risk. COVID-19 is a new virus and there are still a lot of unknowns.

Reception and Year 1 can attend Monday - Thursday only.

Keyworker/Vulnerable children can attend Monday-Friday. Friday is allocated for staff to carry out planning for the children in school, planning for the learning platform, contacting parents of children not in school and cleaning, so the provision and activities on offer this day will be limited. Please only request a Friday if really needed.

Child care for Keyworker's children

These children can attend school with prior arrangement. They will be based in the Hall and Willow class, depending on numbers, which will need to be restricted if they start to increase dramatically.

Keyworker children will need to be booked in with at least **48 hours** notice before they are due to attend. They will be cared for while parents are working. The hours offered will be normal school hours, there is no provision before or after school for childcare.

Care for EHCP/Vulnerable children

These children can also attend but we need at least **48 hours notice** to ensure we have the staff and room available to accommodate them safely. Please be aware that it might **not be possible for your child to have their normal class teacher or 1 to 1 TA** during their time in school this term. Due to the amount of 'bubbles', staff have had to be redeployed elsewhere in the school and cannot move between these bubbles unless urgent and necessary. Please see guidance from the Government, regarding the changes to SEND provision during the pandemic.

Maintaining a safe school environment

The school has put a number of preventative measures in place in order to help to minimise the spread of infection.

As per the advice from the government, the following actions for infection control are in place:

- Displaying coronavirus infection control measures information posters around the school e.g. handwashing signs/social distancing signs/markers on the floor/door capacity signs.
- Encouraging good hygiene by promoting the importance of handwashing for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap in the following circumstances:
 - Before leaving home
 - On arrival at school
 - After using the toilet
 - After breaks and sporting activities
 - Before eating any food, including snacks
 - Before leaving school
- Ensuring hand sanitising dispensers are located throughout the school and in learning spaces.
- EYFS and Year 1 will be in smaller 'bubbles' in different rooms and separate spaces.
- Reduced numbers of staff/pupils in any one space.
- Markers on the floor.
- Clear signs to indicate the maximum capacity of rooms.
- Ensuring pupils, staff and visitors understand that they must cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue away.
- Regular lessons and reminders about hygiene and rules.
- Ensuring frequently touched objects and surfaces are cleaned and disinfected more regularly than usual.
- Calling NHS 111 if someone becomes unwell, isolating any unwell people in a separate room, and providing a separate toilet, where possible.
- Telling staff/pupils to stay at home for seven days if they develop symptoms of the coronavirus and ensure they follow relevant guidance.
- Staff and children are able to be tested for COVID-19 if they show symptoms.
- If one child/adult in a group/'bubble' is tested positive, the whole group will need to isolate for 14 days.
- Children will be encouraged to socially distance in enclosed spaces and will be seated at separate tables (depending on ages), but the Government have advised schools that this is not necessary within their bubble, due to the other safety measures in place. Therefore, please do not expect your child to be 2 metres apart from others at all times. However, we have considered this distance when allocating number of children and adults to each class/area/zone. We will strive for this to happen but you need to be aware that children are likely to come into contact with others.
- Staff will strive to socially distance from children.

- Keeping groups below 15 and where possible we have tried to reduce this number to below 10.
- No visitors on site unless essential, pre-booked and then only if following strict social distancing and preventative measures.
- Children will **not be able to attend school for 14 days** if it comes to light that they and/or their families are **not socially distancing** outside of school.
- Children should not attend any other setting - ideally they should attend **one setting** only e.g. they cannot attend a nursery/childminder/after school club. If they need to attend more than one setting e.g. nursery/childminder, you will need to provide the school a copy of their COV-ID 19 risk assessment.
- One parent must drop/collect a child and no other siblings should attend with them unless absolutely necessary. Only people who live in the same household can drop off/collect a child from school.

EYFS and Year 1

What will school look like for my child?

We want to ensure you have all the details of what a day will look like for your child, as it will be very different to what they are used to. We are not writing to you to instil fear about school, we are writing to reassure you of the measures we have put in place to keep your child and our school community safe. We strongly believe that we have a duty to share with you what school will look like when we open our doors a little wider on the 8th June. We need to do that so that you can prepare your child for what to expect. Returning to school after any break is hard for us all; this time the school the children are returning to will look very different.

- **Start times and end times will be staggered** to ensure social distancing can be adhered to around our school site. Please see information below.
- Drop off and pick-up times will be different and **parents will not be able to enter the building or site** (only year 1 parents in the front playground), so children will need to be prepared to say goodbye to their adults outside of the gates.
- Parents will need to **phone the office to pass any urgent messages on**. Non urgent messages can be emailed.
- You may have heard the word '**bubble**' being used recently. A bubble refers to the **small group** - no more than 15 people who your children will spend their school sessions with. We will strive to make these groups constant and they will be from their own year groups. Keyworker/vulnerable children from year 2/3/4/5/6 will stay together as a group, unless in Reception and Year 1. Reception and Year 1 keyworker/vulnerable will stay with their year groups on

Monday-Thursday. However, if they are also keyworker/vulnerable, they will join the keyworker group on a Friday.

- In their 'bubble' children will be **encouraged to socially distance** and the room will be set up to support this. Staff will strive to ensure this happens. However, as stated previously with young children this cannot be guaranteed and you need to be aware of this from the start. Staff will strive to socially distance from the children but children will be children and could approach the staff without staff realising.
- There are a number of child friendly materials such as short stories and videos which help children to understand the need for social distancing in a sensitive and reassuring way. Here is just one of the many resources now available; <http://www.pollydunbar.com/#> - copy and paste into browser.
- Inside every classroom there will be 8-10 tables and chairs spaced two metres apart (Government guidelines stipulate 15 is the maximum but the dimensions of the classrooms will not allow this many).
- The **children will spend their school sessions inside the same room** unless carrying out learning activities outside. There will be 1 adult in each learning classroom depending on numbers and needs of the group. Whilst we will endeavour to ensure the children know the adults with their group, we cannot guarantee that it will be an adult that they usually work with or their usual class teacher - we do not have enough staff to ensure this can always happen (this will depend on numbers).
- Children will **not be able to move around school without supervision** and will have to follow the designated areas and directions.
- Classrooms will have any **soft furnishings** (carpet area/rugs, soft chairs, soft toys etc.) **removed**; this is to limit the risk to the children and the fabric holding germs. We will send you a video of the classrooms next week so you can show your child to prepare them for the change.
- Each child will need to have their **own set of equipment**, pencils and other stationery; this is to minimise the risk by sharing equipment. This equipment will be provided by the school.
- Not all groups will be able to use the iPads/laptops as these may have been designated to another group and cannot be swapped around because we cannot disinfect them easily after use, therefore the risk is too great.
- Resources and equipment are central to all we do in school, although we have to **minimise the use of shared resources**. We will have separate boxes of

equipment for the 'bubble' to use and they will be cleaned at the end of each day. Other learning resources will be placed on their table for them to use.

- The children will have **designated toilets** which they will use. Staff will ensure that the toilet area is clear before allowing a child to enter. These checks will obviously be carried out by following the 2-metre distancing. The toilets will be cleaned more frequently.
- **Lunch time play will be staggered** to avoid children coming into contact with other bubbles.
- Lunches will be in the form of a **school packed lunch only for EYFS and Year 1**, which will be provided free, as the children are in receipt of universal free school meals. They will be eaten in the classrooms, or preferably outside, with the same midday supervisor for that particular group. We cannot have our lunch in the 'usual way' as this requires too much movement around the school and children bringing in items from home which could risk contamination.
- Key workers/Vulnerable children are able to continue to bring a packed lunch, as the groups are smaller and the children are being 'cared' for rather than being in school in the usual way. If they are free school meals or universal free school meals the pupils can still order a packed lunch if needed.
- **No PE kits required initially.** Teachers will give more information about this in the next few weeks.
- Children can wear school uniform, although we appreciate this might be difficult, as the clothes need to be changed and/or washed daily. If you have enough uniform that still fits and can be washed, then please strive for this. However, if you do not have enough clean clothes/uniform that fits please do not worry. Send the children in sensible clothes and shoes that you do not mind them getting paint on or a little dirty. We will review this in the coming weeks and if the weather continues to stay nice, we can assess to see if school uniform is a necessity.
- Children will **only bring in a snack and a named drink bottle.** We should be able to provide free fruit and continue providing milk for under 5s.
- Children will **not be permitted to bring in any other belongings** e.g. pencil case, books, link book, reading books, toys etc.

- **Reading books will not be sent home** - children will need to continue to read books at home and online books.
- **Paper based homework will not be sent home** but activities will continue to be uploaded on the learning platform (reception learning activities will continue to be uploaded via Tapestry).
- The **home learning platform** work will continue to be set. Staff will be in school working full time and may not be able to logistically manage responding to work/ comments/messages as quickly as before. However, we have tried to allocate a limited amount of time on a Friday for them to carry out some of this preparation and feedback.
- **PPE** (personal protective equipment) does not have to worn by pupils and/or staff, as suggested in the guidance from the *Government*. They state that it only needs to be used for intimate care, first aid, in enclosed spaces or if an adult needed to be in close contact with a child. However, we feel that if staff feel more comfortable and safer wearing PPE then this will be allowed. We would not stop a staff member from doing this, as they have a right to feel safe in their work place.
- There is a new whole school agreement that parents need to sign up to (to ensure they consent to follow the new protocols which have been put into place). The school **risk assessment** which shows all protective measures that will be put in place to help to minimise risk will be available on the school website.
- Staff will be extensively briefed about the risk and protocol they should follow.

Arrangements for the start and end of the school day

The beginning and end of the school day are the busiest times for children and adults congregating together in one place and maintaining safe distances within normal arrangements can be a challenge. Even though numbers should be lower at first, we are starting from the outset with the following arrangements. Please adhere to these timings, to support our efforts at protecting the whole community.

Dropping off times

One parent/carer should drop off and pick up. **EYFS and Keyworker children** - this will be at the **back school gate**. Please handover and leave. Please try not to bring other children who are not attending school with you for drop off and pick up unless absolutely essential. **Year One** children will enter through the left hand gate in to the **front yard** and enter through the door near the bike shed.

Drop off

Drop off Time	Pick up Time	Group	Location
8.55 am	2.55 pm	Reception	Back yard - Bottom Gate
8.45 am	3.00 pm	Year 1	Hub door (front playground/left of entrance by bike shed)
9.00 am	3.15 pm	Keyworker/Vulnerable children in years 2/3/4/5/6	Back Yard - Double Gate

Parents and children MUST adhere to social distancing with other parents, children and staff. Staff will send one child at a time to the parent. We will trial this collection method but it may have to change it if it isn't working well or if there are better options which arise.

Will my child be learning as they usually would?

The academic curriculum will be a secondary consideration at first. As children return, the focus of activities will be on a restorative/recovery curriculum with lots of activities designed to ensure children and staff feel cared for and safe; to build relationships; refresh the school ethos and settle back into school life. Lots of time will be spent outdoors and playing. Initially your child/ren will not be taking part in normal lessons. The first few weeks will be about settling the children back into school, seeing their peers, carrying out lots of activities and learning about the different rules in school and ensuring their wellbeing is being supported. After this, the teachers will start to assess the children's needs and introduce learning activities. These learning activities will be delivered as best they can be under the challenging circumstances and without getting too close to the children. We know this will be a hard task and we trust the teacher's professional judgment to do this the best way they can. The main purpose is to slowly start to bring in elements of the National Curriculum and the Early Year's Foundation Stage but it will not initially be as demanding as it was previously. The pupils might not be able to be taught by their original teacher and this will be dependent on numbers of

children returning. Staff will help the children as best as they can by demonstrating new learning on the whiteboard and giving written, pictorial and verbal explanations.

Can I request a specific group for my child?

Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate requests for particular groups or allocations of places with particular children. Such requests would lead to an imbalance of group numbers and the creation of an unfair situation where some children might be placed with specific friends and others not. As parents will understand, we are unable to share group lists of children with you. As far as possible, for all groups of children, they should be placed with other member of their year group.

Will I know who my teacher will be?

There is a possibility that EYFS and Yr 1 children could be with their normal class teacher. However, if numbers are above the capacity of the rooms and/or numbers for the bubbles, then another member of staff will be needed.

What if my child becomes unwell?

As per the current NHS and government advice, you should **keep your child at home if they develop coronavirus symptoms for a period of seven days**. Symptoms include a high temperature or a new, continuous cough. Where symptoms continue after seven days, or begin to worsen, you should call 111. If someone in your **child's household has symptoms, your child must self-isolate for 14 days** from the day the other person's symptoms started. This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear. More information regarding symptoms and actions can be found on the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>). This guidance also applies to staff.

If you think your child may have been exposed to or has coronavirus, please contact the school at the earliest opportunity.

If your child becomes poorly in school, **showing COVID-19 symptoms**, they will be isolated instantly and you will be contacted to collect them and the above procedures will need to be followed. If the school contacts you to say your child is unwell and needs to be **collected**, please come **straight away**. If you are employed, it might be a good idea to warn your employer that this may happen and that you may have to leave at short notice. Please ensure up to date telephone numbers are recorded in the office.

How can parents help?

As an important part of our school community, I would ask that you continue to encourage **good infection control practices**, such as thorough handwashing, at home and keep your child informed about the things they can do to minimise the spread of infection.

Please do not enter the site. This means not coming to the reception area unless in an emergency. If you did need to come to the reception area, we have a 'one in, one out' system and the glass partition will have to remain closed. It is a good idea to regularly check the school website, facebook, letters, emails and learning platform. If you have any queries, phone or email instead.

Please observe **social distancing** with other parents, pupils and with school staff at **ALL** times.

Please **collect your child at the correct time.** We can no longer allow children to wait in the reception area or for long periods on the yard.

Please continue to treat staff in the way you wish to be treated; appreciate that everyone has their own experience of this pandemic and remember that some staff have not had a break throughout this crisis. They may also have some anxiety about returning to school.

Please understand that it does not feel comfortable or natural for us to put these measures in place and we hope you don't think we are being unfriendly - it is all about keeping everyone as safe as we possibly can.

School events

Please note any events that were in our calendar for June and July have been cancelled such as: residential, trips, special assemblies and sports day.

Support for pupils and families

We do not underestimate how difficult the recent weeks have been for us all and we all will have been affected in some way by the coronavirus pandemic. We recognise the need to focus on pupils' emotional wellbeing as well as their return to learning. Parents may wish to seek support for themselves or children from a range of support agencies which can be found on our website.

We also recognise that if you choose not to send your child back this term, or if we aren't able to offer provision to a wider number of year groups, it will be pivotal that your child has some time with their current class teacher when they eventually return. With this in mind, when the next academic year starts and if we are back to normal, we will build in time for each class to spend time with their current teacher.

We will be putting all of these measures in place to keep your child safe. Please know that we haven't shared this in order to scare you. We want you to have as much information as possible to make an informed choice which is right for your child. We need you and them to be prepared for what school looks like, how it will feel and the different expectations, so that you can help prepare your child, so that they feel safe.

If we have a significant increase in the priority groups: keyworker/vulnerable/EHCP children, then we may have to remove the offer for the Year 1 children in the future.

We need to know the **exact numbers of children** who are returning on the 8th June from EYFS/Year One/Vulnerable and Keyworkers by **Wednesday 3rd June.** Once you have decided we cannot make sudden changes to the numbers and accept children at short notice. We need at **least 5 working days notice for any additional Reception and Year 1 children attending, and 48 hours notice for keyworker/vulnerable/EHCP children**, so we can ensure all safety measures are put in place to accommodate an increase in numbers and organise space/staff. Please make sure you either phone the office/leave a message on the answerphone or email the office (admin@ellwood.gloucs.sch.uk) or your child's class teacher by Wednesday 3rd June. **We will only be accepting those who confirmed 'yes' on the week commencing the 8th June.**

Please be aware that due to the new Track and Trace system being introduced the classes and / or school might need to close suddenly and at short notice, so please be prepared for this.

School will look different, but it will still be filled with love, laughter and an amazing team of people who have missed the children so much and want to do the best for them. It is so important that we all support each other at this time.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting the school over recent months.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Milford

Summary

- Normal school hours.
- Uniform to be worn if possible.
- Year One and EYFS - Monday to Thursday only (unless Keyworker/EHCP/Vulnerable). Must be booked in at least 7 days before.
- Keyworker/EHCP/Vulnerable - can come in all week if parents are at work. They must be booked in 48 hours before.
- Only confirmed 'YES' children can attend week commencing 8th June. If you miss this deadline, you will need to book in for the following week.
- No other belongings to be bought to school - only lunchbox, snack and water bottle for Keyworker/EHCP/Vulnerable. EYFS / Year 1 - water bottle and snack only.
- No PE kits needed first week back - teachers will contact you about this.
- No parents/visitors on the site or in school.
- Phone the office/email for contact.
- Social distancing to be adhered to at all times.

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