



Giffard Park Primary School

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Tuesday 19th May 2020

Update for the planned return of Smart Steps, Foundation, Year 1 and Year 6 children

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for your continued support at such a difficult and confusing time for us all. I am writing to you to show you the next stages in our planning.

Parent Survey

If you are a parent of a child in **Smart Steps, Foundation, Year 1, Year 6** or you are a **key/critical worker** you will have let us know already whether you wish your child to be part of our phased return or not. If you have not let us know either way we are assuming your child will not be attending. You will not be fined if a child is not attending, your child will not lose their place and they will still have access to home learning. **If you have not replied to our survey and you are planning to send your child into school please let Vanessa Ford know ASAP and by the absolute latest midday tomorrow to enable us to prepare our ratios for safety.** The best way to do this is via email at: school@giffardpark.milton-keynes.sch.uk

Our Next Steps

Step 1

Our aim is to sign off our plan and confirm with Governors so that by Friday of this week we can share further details of this with you. I will also be communicating the rationale and principles behind the plan to you as parents. We do not wish to rush such key decisions.

Step 2

We will be preparing the school for the return of children for the Year Groups above and children of Key Workers. We will be communicating with families about changes to the school day as to when and how to pick up and drop off. Our school will be **closed to all children** over half term and our cleaning team will also be doing another deep clean.

Step 3

Start the phased return from June 2nd - the likelihood is there will then be a gradual and phased re-opening of the school for the specified year groups, a year group at a time, as opposed to all returning at once on 2nd June. This would be too overwhelming and we need to give each year group a little time to adapt. The timeline and set up for this will be shared with you by Thursday of this week. Keyworker children will return straight away from 8.30am until 3.20pm each day.

We intend for the children to return into their class groups as their 'bubble'. Adults are also working within 'bubbles' too within year groups so your child will have limited and consistent teachers/teaching assistants working with them for safety. Keyworker children will continue with their in-school provision after half term starting back on 1st June. We will need to take a slow and steady approach to the transition back to school for some children with specific needs and we will communicate this to relevant families.



We will not be able to offer breakfast and after school clubs initially in order to protect the 'bubbles' and children/adults not mixing with other classes. This is DFE guidance. We will do our best to try to please as many families as we can with our plan and timings of year group returns; however we accept that for some families our plan may still have difficulties (e.g. if you still have siblings at home in other year groups or usually have before and after school clubs) and we need to remind you all that is a phased approach and gradual re-opening and we are working our way through these phases over time.

1. Phase 1- this is the phase we are in now (open for Keyworker children and vulnerable groups as we have been since March)
2. Phase 2- this is the phase from 1st June to the start of the summer holidays- this is our gradual return for certain year groups. We expect numbers of children attending from Smart Steps, Foundation, Year One and Year Six to grow as confidence returns over the month of June and into July. We have not yet had detailed information involving the phased return of children in Year 2, 3, 4, and 5 but as soon as we do we will let you know and plan for this with you.
3. Phase 3- this will be the plan from September- we will need to look at how Phase 2 goes and adapt from there, see what updated advice there is from the DFE as well as see how the national picture lies re COVID 19. Once known, we would very much hope to be able to offer breakfast club and after school club again then.

Social distancing in schools

The DFE and unions are still providing additional guidance on this and we are receiving updates that we need to add into our plans. We do know that unlike adults and older children, primary aged children cannot be expected to consistently maintain 2 metres distance from other children and we have to re-open our school with this taken into account. That said, we do feel the reduction in class sizes to no more than 15 as per Government guidance, increasing hand washing and cleaning, the changes to classroom layouts, timetable, staggered breaks and start and finish times will mitigate this as best we can.

Our home/school learning packs will continue to be the main driver of our teaching and learning for the foreseeable future. As we will still have children at home, we will work with you as parents/carers to support home learning and we are looking at ways to develop this further for you as we know it is not an easy task. I hope that this is clear and helpful and that you appreciate me sharing some of the thinking and preparation going on behind the scenes.

Please be reassured that whether you are a parent who has no anxiety about your child coming back to school, or if you are a little unsure, or indeed if you are very worried, then we are here for all of you and our communication to you is trying to bear all that in mind. Ultimately, this is about us all in society learning how to live with COVID 19 and gaining confidence in how this will work and affect us. We know that we will all take different times to acclimatise and our school is here to work with you round that.

Whilst nothing can be risk-free and we also know we are dealing with children, please be assured we are following all the government guidance and indeed putting in additional protective measures where we feel they are needed. Whilst it will not quite be 'school' as we usually know it, we can make it the best it can be in the current climate and be the warm, caring and positive learning place we are so proud of.

Yours sincerely,



Miss E Donoghue
Headteacher

