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13th May 2020

Dear Parents /Carers

Government Guidance re: phased re-opening of schools in June

Following Sunday's speech, I am sure you have seen all the media coverage of the Prime Minister's plans to take us out of the COVID-19 lockdown. There is currently an incredible amount of information to digest and many questions for us all to consider. No doubt, there will be continuous adjustments in the coming weeks.

For your information, the guidance for parents and carers can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

The Prime Minister has outlined plans for a phased approach where Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 come back to school after half term first, with the ambition for the other half of school to follow. Ministers and the DFE are well aware that social distancing will not be possible within classroom settings for these children. They have set out some principles that they think will help to restrict the spread of the virus within our schools.

Children in these year groups are strongly encouraged to attend (where the school can offer places and there are no 'shielding' concerns for the child or their household), so that they gain the educational wellbeing and benefits of attending. Children who do not attend will not be penalised and the school's attendance data will not be scrutinised.

We will work hard to put measures in place to create the safest environment possible, but I am sure that you will appreciate that we will not be able to make and guarantee that all risks are eliminated. By trialling the return to school of a reduced number of pupils, the Government will be able to assess if children accessing school will affect the 'R rate' and this will help decide if the rest of the school can return at the end of June.

We are currently risk assessing the situation to ensure that a phased reopening can happen as safely as possible. As you are aware, our capacity is limited across five classroom spaces. In the first instance, we will need to utilise the space for three different year groups, as well as continuing to offer provision for the emergency group for critical (key) worker children and those who are deemed to be vulnerable.

Due to reduced staffing levels, when planning our groups we will have to look at various scenarios, which **may include**:



- children doing alternate days,
- children doing 2 or 3 days in a week
- children doing half days

We will consider the pros and cons of such scenarios and risk assess the possibilities to decide which will be the best solution for our school. We will not have the capacity at this stage to offer full time provision.

Critical Worker and Vulnerable Pupils

For children in the other year groups (Y2, Y3, Y4 and Y5), we will still be providing a service for the children of critical (key) workers and places for vulnerable pupils. All key worker children regardless of year group can continue to attend in line with key workers' work rotas.

What will the new provision look like?

We are currently working with staff and governors to draw up plans, and we will provide you with full details as soon as these are finalised. The measures to be taken will include the following but this is not exhaustive:

- Times of arrival at school and departure will be staggered and a one-way system will be in place for dropping children off and/or picking them up.
- Parents dropping children off will be required to maintain social distancing.
- Children will be assigned to a group of 15 or less pupils. This group will then stay together throughout the day creating a 'bubble' and avoiding other groups.
- Once groups are arranged, they will be fixed for the duration of the phased return.
- Wherever possible, our smaller class groups will have the same staffing each session they are in school.
- School uniform will not be used during the phased reopening period.
- Break times will be staggered for the different groups of pupils.
- Non-approved and pre-registered visitors will not be allowed in to school and all parental communication should be via email or telephone.
- Cleaning will continue to be rigorous in order to ensure that all areas are sanitised that the children and staff touch and we will ensure washing facilities are regularly replenished.

In terms of school dinners, we will work with the catering team to review school lunch provision and will outline the details of what this will look like in due course.

Social Distancing Guidelines: As previously stated, no class size will be able to exceed 15 pupils. Each environment will be carefully risk assessed to ensure that pupils can remain a good distance apart. However, I need to make you aware that within its guidance, the Government has stated the following: **'We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff - we are taking this into account.'** Considering this, please be aware that whilst endeavouring to enforce children to social distance, we cannot make this happen or guarantee that this will happen 100% of the time. This becomes more applicable the younger the age-range of the children.

In order to help with the first stage of our planning, **if your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6** and you wish for your child (ren) to attend school from Monday 1st June, please contact us to **confirm whether or not you will send your child back to school during the first part of**

the phased reopening by Friday 15th May at 3pm. Please do this by emailing the school office via Mrs Laslett on r.laslett@oxpsringprimary.co.uk as soon as possible.

Once we have collated the numbers, we will contact all parents with further details when they have been finalised.

I am sure that many of you will have a list of questions, which is completely understandable. Any questions that you have will be collated and a general response will be circulated as soon as the final preparations are completed.

Many thanks for your incredible support and understanding during these continually challenging times.

Stay safe everyone

Warmest regards

Sharon Irwin