



22nd May 2020

Phased re-opening at Plaistow and Kirdford Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers,

I find starting letters very tricky. In my mind I always have Mrs Powell echoing in my head about how I need a clear plan with a good, concise introductory paragraph and today is no different – in fact I can hear her calling out now and telling me to get to the point!

So here I go...

Today I am writing to you about the government's announcement on 10th May to begin a phased re-opening of primary schools.

In the Prime Minister's address he explained that schools would begin to readmit children in Reception, Year One and Year Six from the 1st June. Further guidance was received from the Department of Education later that week telling schools that we were to prioritise the following groups and in this order:

1. Children of Key Workers
2. Reception
3. Year One
4. Year Six

Thank you for your patience with regards to information about our re-opening. I wanted to make sure that before we consulted with parents that governors and our staff team were in a position to be very clear about what we were proposing to do.

Having consulted with staff and governors I can confirm that we have developed a plan that will allow us to re-open for these groups in line with government guidance. However, it does mean that there will need to be practical changes to school life in order to keep staff, children and families safe.

Children will be in small groups - no bigger than 15 children per group

The guidance from the government makes it clear that social distancing cannot be maintained in young children. We will be putting measures in place around school that will support social distancing and we will have some new classroom rules that we will all have to work with.

Because children are in small groups they may not be with their class teacher or all of their friends

Throughout the guidance the importance of staying in distinct groups to keep the risk of an infection low is reinforced. This means that each group will be taught by the same staff team of teacher and teaching assistant. These staff teams will be the teams greeting the children, overseeing lunch and playtimes and saying good bye at the end of the day. **Groups of children will not be able to mix.** They may see each other at playtimes but will only be able to play with children in their group.

To minimise the number of adults on site, drop offs and pickups are staggered

Where possible we are encouraging families to drop off and pick up directly at school and avoiding using school transport.





School will be open Monday to Thursday only. Key Worker children will still be able to access school on a Friday.

This will provide staff with the necessary time to complete additional planning for lessons taking place both in school and that learning will continue to be available through google classroom. Teachers will still be providing online learning for Reception and Years 1 – 6 throughout the school week. It will also enable us to ensure we are meeting our safeguarding requirements as well as a more thorough clean of school.

School attendance is not compulsory.

There will be no fines or penalties for non-attendance. We will continue to set work for children not in school.

What next?

Attached to this letter is our plan for re-opening – it is long, but it does set out how we intend school to operate, we hope, as clearly and succinctly as possible. We've sent it out to all of our families because we want to be transparent and clear in how school will be different over the next few weeks.

It is a plan written for staff and parents. It is a plan that only works if families work with us in adhering to the government's guidance both in school and out of it. If we, as a community, families, parents and children fail to follow the rules outside of school we put our staff team and children at school at risk.

I ask that every family with children in **Reception, Year One, Year Six and those who are Key Workers** read the plan in full before responding to the survey you will receive later today.

The responses to these surveys will help us to plan class groups and what we can do in our class rooms. If families could return their surveys as soon as possible, it would be greatly appreciated.

Once we have our numbers and groups confirmed we will send out via school comms (email) a message letting you know which group your child is in. Once we set the groups, we will not be able to change them.

Over the coming week we will be making blog posts to show you and your children how school will work when they return. We do ask that you talk to your child once you have read the plan to help them begin to prepare if they are returning to school.

All of this planning is with the 1st June in mind. We will await a final decision from central government at some point next week and then confirm these plans with you via school comms.

This plan has all been developed based on the current government guidance on the prioritised year groups that we should invite to attend school physically. As and when this guidance changes we will need to review this plan and come back to you with any proposed changes.

I want to make it clear that although there will be practical changes to the way our school will operate, our ethos and heart remains true. School will look and feel different but we will still very much be a school where children love to learn, look after each other and have fun.

As always, be safe, be happy and be well.

Yours sincerely,

Mr King