



ESHER CHURCH SCHOOL

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August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

COVID-19 FULL SCHOOL RE-OPENING PLAN

As outlined in our end of summer term newsletter, the government has set out plans for all schools in England to re-open fully at the start of the Autumn Term. They believe that the balance is now overwhelmingly in favour of children returning to school as the prevalence of Covid-19 has decreased across the country, NHS Test and Trace is up and running and more is known about transmission of the virus. Whilst the government guidance recognises that it is not possible to create a totally risk free environment, it suggests a number of measures that schools should take to minimise risk and make schools as safe as possible for pupils and staff.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming all of our Year 1-6 children back to school on **Thursday 3rd September**. Parents of our new Reception children have already received information about their home visits and school start dates with their induction details.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with necessary information around school re-opening, including detail around the control measures in place. Our aims in identifying appropriate control measures are:

- To ensure the social and emotional wellbeing of our pupils and staff whilst minimising the risk of transmission of Covid-19
- Protective measures are proportionate; they still allow us to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and full educational experience for children
- To ensure any gaps in learning following the partial closure of schools last academic year are quickly identified and addressed

Our school has been open throughout lockdown and gradual re-opening, initially for children of critical workers and vulnerable pupils, then, since 1st June, for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. When guidance allowed we were also able to welcome our Year 5 children back for some in-school sessions. At the end of the summer term, about 200 children were attending school each day. This has allowed us to try and already embed some of the safety measures, which will continue into the Autumn Term alongside the additional measures that we are introducing to allow every child to return as safely as possible.

Does my child have to attend?

From September 2020, attendance for all school-aged children is once again compulsory.

Following the reduction in the prevalence of Covid19 in the community, and the relaxation of shielding measures from 1st August 2020 all children registered at the school must attend, unless they are unable to do so because they are complying with clinical/public health advice or they have another statutory reason to be away from school eg. agreed leave of absence, sickness etc



Children are not permitted to attend school if they are required to self isolate following a holiday in a country that is not covered by the travel corridor exemption, until the isolation period is over. Check <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors#stay-up-to-date> for up to date information on the countries this applies to.

Does my child need to wear school uniform?

We believe that wearing school uniform plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of our school so we expect that children will wear full uniform, including school shoes. Uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more frequently or any differently than usual. On PE days (these will be confirmed with you at the beginning of term) children should come to school in their full school PE kit and suitable trainers as this will reduce the need for the children to change whilst at school.

A full school uniform and PE Kit list is available on our website [here](#).

If your financial circumstances make it difficult for you to provide uniform for your child please let us know as we are able to offer some support with this.

What about swimming?

The Department for Education have confirmed that we are able to open the pool for swimming lessons. We will work with our swimming coach, Mr Peet, to ensure we are able to allow the children to change before and after their lessons in a safe way. We expect swimming lessons to start in the week commencing 14th September.

How will we manage the start and end of the day?

One of the greatest risks of adult-to-adult transmission remains when parents are dropping off at the start and end of the school day. It is therefore important that parents and carers practise strict social distancing during drop off and pick up. To prevent crowding at the beginning and end of the school day we will operate staggered drop off and pick up times arranged as follows.

Year Groups:	Drop off 'window'	Pick up 'window'
R, 1, 6	8:30 – 8:40 am	3:00 – 3:10 pm
3, 5	8:40 – 8:50 am	3:10 – 3:20 pm
2, 4	8:50 – 9:00am	3:20 – 3:30 pm

If you have children in different year groups please drop all your children during the earliest applicable drop off window.



Children in Reception (after induction period):

Children and their parents can enter the school site from either the front or back gate and children should be taken directly to the Reception outside area where their teachers will be waiting for them. As the path at the back of the school does not lend itself well to social distancing parents must leave via the Milbourne Lane entrance following the signed route even if they entered via the back gate.

At collection time the children can be collected from the Reception outside area during the allocated time window.

Children in Years 1, 2 and 3

Children can be dropped off at either the front or back gate and children will meet their teachers in the 'zone' allocated to their class. As the path at the back of the school does not lend itself well to social distancing parents must leave via the Milbourne Lane entrance following the signed route even if they entered via the back gate.

Parents and carers will not be allowed on the school site other than to walk from the back gate to the front gate to leave the site via the signed route.

Children in Years 1 to 3 can be collected from the front (Milbourne Lane) gate. Please ensure that 2m social distancing is maintained between adults whilst you wait to collect your child.

Children in Years 4, 5 and 6

Children can be dropped at the front or back gate and the children will make their way, via the outside of the school building, to their classroom door. To encourage parents of older children to 'drop and go' we will aim to arrange for members of school staff or parent volunteers to 'man' the ends of the path at the back of the school so that children can make their own way to the back gate safely. If parents arrive at school with their child via the back gate they need to leave via the Milbourne Lane exit.

Members of school staff will be on duty at both the front and back gate and will be able to point you or your child in the right direction if you are unsure about where to go. In our experience from last half term the children get used to these new arrangements very quickly after some initial first day nerves and the more relaxed you are about the arrangements the more relaxed your child/ren will be.

Travelling to and from school

We strongly encourage parents and carers to walk or cycle to school and not to drive. Not only is this better for health and for the environment, it also prevents congestion which makes social distancing more difficult. In the summer term we were most impressed by the numbers of children who were cycling to school with their parents both confidently and competently



Will Breakfast Club and After School Club run?

Yes. Breakfast Club and After School Club will run as normal. Details of how to reserve spaces for your child at these clubs will be sent next week.

What about other Extra-Curricular Clubs?

We are working with our extra curricular club providers and staff to ensure we can run as many clubs as possible in order to provide a full educational experience for our children. There are some restrictions – for example contact sports are not permitted – however providers are adapting their offer to eliminate contact elements in order to continue to run the clubs. A full list of extra curricular clubs on offer will be sent at the beginning of term.

What Safety Measures are in place?

The safety measures that we put in place need to be proportionate to the risk and balanced against the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of the children. It is important that the measures we take are implemented in a way that ensures that our children are happy and confident at school, are able to socialise with their peers appropriately and have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The school has completed a full risk assessment which outlines all the safety measures which will be put in place to ensure that any risk of an outbreak is reduced. These are focused on the following areas:

- Good hand washing and personal hygiene.
- Good respiratory hygiene (catch it, bin it, kill it)
- Reducing contact between classes and year groups
- Ensuring that anyone who has symptoms (or has been in contact with anyone testing positive for Covid 19) stays at home.
- Working with NHS Test and Trace should a case be discovered in school



Hand hygiene

Hand washing is the most important tool in the fight against Covid-19 transmission. We will ensure that this is consistent by:

- putting soap on the hands of every child entering the building (so that they have to go and wash their hands before they can touch any surfaces)
- ensuring that the children wash their hands after every activity and break
- continuing to provide disinfectant gel for staff in every classroom; older children can bring their own disinfectant gel for personal use if they so wish, although soap and water is better and will be insisted upon even if the children use gel
- putting a lidded bin in every classroom for disposal of tissues and paper towels. Extra care will be taken when emptying these at the end of the day

Respiratory hygiene

We will continue to remind the children about respiratory hygiene using 'Catch It, Bin It, Kill It'. We will ensure that:

- boxes of paper tissues will be readily available in every classroom and we will encourage children to bring tissue packs to school with them.
- children wash their hands after sneezing, blowing their nose etc
- used tissues are disposed of immediately after use in the lidded bin provided

Reducing Contact

Assembly & Whole school gatherings:

There will be no assemblies in the hall or whole school gatherings until the DfE advise us that it is safe enough to do this. We will continue to deliver collective worship and assemblies via Teams which the children can share in their classrooms.

Class and Year Group Bubbles:

We will need to continue using the 'bubbles' system (children are in specific groups which don't mix with one another) until we are told that it is safe enough to allow children to mix freely. For year groups 1-6 children will remain, as far as possible, in their class bubbles inside school and in a year group bubble outside and in the Dining Hall.

Whilst classes won't mix freely inside school, groups of children from different bubbles may mix in small groups for intervention groups, small group teaching etc. Outside, whole year groups will be allowed to play together but different year groups will be kept apart by playing in different



zones. Staff will be able to move in and out of different bubbles if needed; these staff will ensure that they maintain social distancing from children as far as is possible.

Staggered Daily Timetable:

Each year group will have a set timetable for the day including the staggered start time, break/lunch and finish time.

Lunch/Snack arrangements:

We will aim to seat all year groups in their bubbles in the dining hall. Initially we will continue to provide packed lunches (containing a wrap/sandwich/sausage roll or pasta pot, vegetable sticks, fruit and a biscuit/flapjack) as we were doing before the holiday, but will aim to re-introduce hot meals once we are able to do so. Lunch continues to be free for all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Children in Years 3-6 can have a school lunch or bring in their own packed lunch (no nuts, sweets, fizzy drinks) if they prefer. All children should continue to bring in a piece of fruit for break time. Please make sure the children can 'access' their fruit break independently so that staff do not need to handle children's food. Children need to bring a filled water bottle to school with them each day.

Each year group will have their own Lunch Break Supervisors who will stay with them in the dining hall and in the playground.

Safety in the classroom environment:

The following processes will be put in place to reduce the risk of transmission within the classroom environment:

- Pupils will sit in rows so that they are all facing forwards for much of their time in class. This arrangement will be adapted for younger children who may require a more flexible environment
- Infant children will be given their own stationery pack to reduce the need to share regularly used equipment. Parents of children in years 3-6 can buy a clear pencil case containing all necessary stationery equipment from the school. Instructions about this will be sent via Parentmail
- Some furniture and resources may be removed from classrooms so that only essential resources are available. This limits what will need cleaning
- Staff will have access to cleaning materials so that they (or older children) can quickly clean surfaces throughout the day



- Staff will clean door handles and other regularly touched areas each morning and after lunch. All classrooms will be professionally cleaned daily.
- Reading books that are taken home will be left for 72 hours before being taken home by another child.

Safety at play:

Children will be kept safe at playtimes by:

- being kept within a designated space on the playground/ field with their year group bubble
- having separate play equipment just for each year group
- washing their hands after every break

Safely moving around the school:

The risk of contamination and transmission in corridors, toilets and other common areas will be reduced by:

- Each class/year group having set toilets; doors, taps etc will be cleaned throughout the day
- All non-fire doors will be left open to reducing touching of door handles and windows opened as ventilation reduces the likelihood of transmission
- Children will walk around the outside of the building to move between areas when needed
- Break times and Lunchtimes are staggered so that different bubbles are not using the corridor spaces at any one time.
- Children will use the cloakrooms in small groups. Lunchboxes will be stored under desks.

Keeping shared equipment safe:

Science, Maths and PE equipment which is used by many classes should be wiped down with disinfectant spray at the end of a session before returning it to a central storage area.

Books can be shared within the class bubble but should not be routinely shared between year groups for the time being.

Teachers will once again be able to assess children's work in books as usual as this is no longer considered a risk.



Staff Social Distancing:

Staff will aim to model safe social distancing to the children.

Staff who work with a named individual child can work more closely with them so long as they are managing this additional risk e.g. sitting side-by-side, not face to face, washing hands regularly, trying to maintain 1m distance from the child's face. All children with EHCPs will have their own risk assessments.

Support staff who work with lots of children on a one-to-one basis will avoid sitting in close proximity to numerous children. The risk can be reduced by not being at the same height as the child so that there is at least 1m distance between faces, and working a larger space or working outdoors.

Teachers and support staff will avoid sitting with a small group for any length of time and will lead small groups either with the teacher/ LSA standing and the children sitting on chairs or by the teacher/LSA sitting on a chair and the children sitting on the floor.

Keeping visitors to school safe:

The school will continue to limit the number of people entering the school. Supply teachers, sports coaches and other essential personnel will be allowed to work in school.

Volunteers, including parent volunteers, will be allowed in school as long as they engage with the additional measures in place to protect our community.

Ideally contractors will carry out work outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, the school administration and site team will discuss safety measures with all visiting contractors prior to entering the building.

Developing Symptoms

Should a child develop symptoms of Covid-19 whilst at school:

1. The child will be isolated within the school in an outdoor space; staff caring for the child have access to appropriate PPE if they are unable to maintain social distancing. The space in which the child waited until collection will be thoroughly cleaned
2. The child will be sent home
3. Children and adults who have been in close contact with the child will be identified
4. The child will need to be tested before they return to school
5. The child will not be allowed back into school until a negative test result has been received (usually within 48 hours of the test).



Should a single child/ adult be confirmed as having Covid 19:

1. The child/ adult will not be allowed to return to school for at least 7 days until their temperature returns to normal and they feel well. *Children may continue to have a cough/ loss of taste or smell for some weeks after they have recovered from the virus and would be allowed to return to school once it has been established that they are no longer contagious (usually 7 days).*
2. The school will send home anyone who has been in close contact with the child/ adult as a precautionary measure.
3. The school will liaise with the NHS Health Protection Team who will risk assess the outbreak and decide how many children/adults need to be sent home to self-isolate.
4. The NHS Health Protection Team will communicate with parents if information needs to be shared. The school will not share the names of children testing positive for Covid 19 beyond those adults/ families which need to know this information.

Should two or more children/ adults be confirmed as having Covid 19 within a 14 day period:

1. The NHS Health Protection Team will assess how the school should respond to a cluster of cases.
2. This may include asking a whole class, year group or potentially the whole school to self- isolate for 14 days. Should this be the case the school will be well prepared to move straight into remote learning so there are no breaks in children's education.

Will the curriculum change?

The government is encouraging schools to offer a full educational experience to children, including the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum. There will be some minor changes to the curriculum as follows:

- We are following the government advice around singing in schools closely. They have now said singing is allowed, as long as it is quiet singing! There are things we can do to make singing safe for our children (sing outdoors with children back to back etc) which we will explore
- Contact sports are currently not allowed. As much PE as possible will be delivered outdoors – where lessons do happen in the hall it will be cleaned between groups
- Trips and visits will be risk assessed to ensure they can go ahead safely
- Some children may feel a little anxious about returning to school after such a long absence. Additional PSHCE sessions will be added into the timetable so that children have the opportunity to discuss their feelings, positive and negative, to ensure we are able to reassure them. Our experience in the summer term showed us that most



children simply wanted to get back into school and get on with learning – however some children may have found the lockdown and/ or return to school more stressful. Of course our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant, Mrs Valter, will be on hand to offer support where needed.

Changes to help children catch up on missed learning:

1. Children will be assessed on their current level of attainment in phonics, reading, writing and maths in the early weeks of term so that teachers have a clear understanding of where children have gaps. Children will undertake standardised assessments in the first half of the autumn term to further support this process. We will hold parent consultations (likely to be online) on Tuesday 20th and Wednesday 21st October to share your child's academic attainment and outline any additional provision in place if required. We will, of course share pastoral and social information at these meetings. At the current time we are still planning to run our Learning Review Day as planned on 20th November, as this has proved an invaluable opportunity to engage children in their own learning journey in previous years.
2. In September there will be an emphasis on basic skills, handwriting and writing stamina as we know that some children will have lost some of these skills as they may not have been writing as much as home as they would have been in school.
3. Whilst the school will continue to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, there will be a strong emphasis on Reading, Writing and Maths. This will be achieved by incorporating these core areas as the focus into all humanities and science lessons so that children are reading or writing in nearly every lesson of the day.
4. The government has yet to announce full details on how the 'catch-up premium', an allocation of funding provided to schools to help children catch up on missed learning, will be organised, but the school is already looking at the most effective ways to use this funding.

Behaviour and Conduct

Last term the children in school demonstrated just how able they are to pick up new routines and follow the new regulations in school. Re-establishing routines will be a priority in the first couple of weeks and we will continue to offer a lot of praise and reassurance when they return and the usual rewards will continue to apply.



Setting up routines will include instructions for how to:

1. move around the classroom at a safe distance
2. move around the school building
3. play in the new zones including separation from other bubbles
4. maintain good respiratory hygiene when coughing, sneezing etc.
5. clean surfaces and resources
6. wash hands thoroughly
7. visit the toilet
8. follow the new lunch break procedures
9. work safely at tables

Children with specific needs who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) will once again have access to one to one support staff, although there will be the need for some flexibility in how this operates. The school will endeavour to return to full EHCP provision in September.

We will continue ensuring the safety of pupils in relation to behaviour.

The school cannot allow children to be beyond the safe control of an adult as this will risk transmission and therefore the safety of others. If a child is behaving in a way which is unsafe (refusing instructions, running away, acting unsafely):

- a. An adult will remind them of the importance of following the instructions. They will be given time to think and calm down
- b. They will be asked again to comply with the instruction. If they refuse then a member of the SLT will be sent for
- c. If the child refuses to follow the instruction by a member of SLT then the child cannot be safely supported in school and the parents will be asked to take the child home. This will be recorded as a Fixed Term Exclusion.

Communication with Parents:

Now more than ever, the partnership between home and school will be critical in ensuring that the children settle well into school and that any gaps in learning are quickly filled. The school will promote this by:

1. holding an additional parents' evening in the first half term so that parents can discuss gaps in learning and catch up plans with the class teacher
2. Staff will phone parents to discuss specific issues or concerns if necessary
3. Continuing with our 'open door' policy. Although parents are not allowed on the school site you can contact staff by phoning or emailing the school office at any time and we will get back to you as soon as possible.



Despite all the additional measures we are putting in place, our aim is to ensure that school feels as 'normal' as possible for the children. They will be able to learn together and play together again; we know they will be as excited about this as we are. During the summer term we were amazed at how quickly the children settled back into the school environment and we are sure that the return in September will be no different.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone again on September 3rd.

With best wishes

Cathy Bell
Headteacher