

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Important information regarding the phased reopening of school**

I hope you are all keeping well. Apologies for the length of this letter, but there is a lot of information that I need to share with you.

As you will have seen in the news, there has been a lot of debate about when and how schools should re-open. We have made extensive plans based on government guidance, our assessment of the needs of our children and families, the safety of our children, families and staff, as well as consultations between Lambeth and the trade unions. **Please note that all of the plans I am writing to you about are subject to lots of uncertainties so nothing is definite. The guidance from the government we are having to follow changes daily so therefore our plans are having to adapt regularly.**

A reminder to you that we have made plans in two phases:

**Phase 1:** The return of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. It is our intention to open for these year groups on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June** if the government confirms a wider opening of schools from this date. We have made the difficult decision to not re-open our Nursery at this time. We understand that this is going to come as disappointing news to our Nursery families, but I hope you understand that this decision has not been taken lightly. We simply do not have the classroom space and staffing capacity to have the school back in groups of up to 15.

**Phase 2:** The phased return of all other year groups. There are suggestions from the government that this might take place at the end of June. Our understanding that the earliest this could be is 22<sup>nd</sup> June, but again this is the earliest it could be, not a definite return date.

Moving into Phase 1 and 2 all still depends on five key things happening in the fight against coronavirus, which we understand the government will make a decision about on 28<sup>th</sup> May:

- the NHS's ability to cope is fully protected
- the daily death rate is dropping
- infection rates are falling to manageable levels
- there are sufficient supplies of testing and protective equipment
- there is no risk of a "second peak" of infections.

It is possible that the government will postpone the re-opening of schools and we will notify you of any delayed start date to Phase 1 as soon as possible.

### **Risk Assessment**

We, as a leadership team in consultation with our full Governing Body, have made a detailed risk assessment which I am sharing with you today. This hopefully will support you in making the decision as to whether your child returns to school this term.

I would like to make it very clear at this point that firstly, attending school this term is not compulsory and if you decide to keep your child at home we will support you with that decision, and secondly, this risk assessment is our assessment of the risks. We cannot guarantee that the measures we have put in place will prevent any cases of coronavirus developing within our community but what we can say is that we believe we have put in place all the measures we can to greatly minimise the risks. We would not be re-opening the school if we believed that the risks to the children and staff were high.

It is also important that you are aware that children in the younger year groups will not be socially distancing 2 metres apart. This is an impossible expectation on a group of 4, 5 and 6 year olds, and the government guidance is not suggesting that is what we should be doing. Where possible, and certainly in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), we will be asking and encouraging the children to socially distance and their desks will be 2 metres apart, but you must understand this will not be possible at all times.

### **Changes to how we operate: Phase 1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 6)**

I must also make you aware that if you decide to send your child back to school in the summer term, the school will be a very different place to what it was when we went into lockdown in March. We are having to make huge adaptations to how we work and how we operate as a school in order to keep everyone as safe as possible, and this means that many of the things Walnut Tree Walk normally offers the children will not be on offer for the foreseeable future. This will of course be quite strange for the children when they return, but I can assure you that we will do our very best to give the best and happiest experience we can within the parameters that have been set. The detailed changes are in our risk assessment, but the main changes are as follows:

- As directed by the government in their guidance, we will be running the school in classes/groups (or 'bubbles' as they are sometimes being referred to) of no more than 15 children. This will mean that your child is likely to not be taught by their normal class teacher, and they will not be all together with all their peers.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes will also be organised so that the children do not interact with children from other groups in order to minimise the risks of spreading the infection.
- There will be staggered start and end of day times for each year group to avoid congestion in the street and playground. The start and end of day times for the year groups in Phase 1 are as follows:

| <b>Year Group</b> | <b>Start Time</b> | <b>End Time</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Reception         | 9:00am            | 2:30pm          |
| Year 1            | 9:30am            | 3:00pm          |
| Year 6            | 9:15am            | 3:15pm          |

**Please be aware that this provision may change once we move into Phase 2, and the timings of the day might change. It may be necessary to change it to a rota or**

**part time system, depending on our staffing capacity and further government guidance.**

- There will be increased cleaning of the school throughout the day. Play equipment will be cleaned between groups for the younger children, as well as the toilets, door handles, tables etc.
- KS1 and KS2 children will have their own individual desks with their own individual pack of resources (pencils, ruler, scissors etc) so that they do not have to share.
- As was the case before we went into lockdown, the children will be washing their hands throughout the day, and there will be hand sanitiser for all children to use when they enter the playground.
- We will not be running any wrap-around provision (breakfast club or after school club). We had hoped to be able to continue this, but the government guidance is now instructing us not to do so because of the risk of mixing children between different groups or 'bubbles'
- The office will be closed. All contact will need to be to Sharon via telephone or email. No parents or carers will be allowed in the school premises.
- If you decide to not return your child on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June and then you change your mind, that is fine but we will only re-admit pupils at the start of each week (so you would need to wait until the following Monday). This is because we have to make staffing arrangement in advance based on numbers of children.

### **Phase 2 (Possibly Years 2, 3, 4 and 5)**

We are not in a position to give details about what this Phase will look like as we are awaiting further guidance and decisions to be made by the government and unions. I will write to you again nearer the time about this.

### **Key Worker Provision**

We will be continuing to run our provision for the children of key workers (as defined by the Government and shared with you in previous letters) and some vulnerable children (eg children with an EHCP or who have a social worker). As you know, we have been offering this provision every day since we went onto lockdown, but this will also now have to change slightly. This will operate from **8:50am to 3:30pm** and we sadly will no longer be allowed to offer breakfast and after school club provision on top of this. Wherever possible, please bring in and collect your child at those times, but we understand that may not always be possible. **The Key Worker provision will be available on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June from 8:50am to 3:30pm**, but the school will be closed to everyone else for staff training and preparations for the potential re-opening on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

If you are a keyworker who has not required our keyworker provision so far but will require it from 1<sup>st</sup> June please let us know as soon as possible. Please complete the form at the end of this letter, and return by the end of the day tomorrow (Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May).

### **Home Learning**

We will continue to provide the weekly home learning to all children across the school. This will include those year groups that have been invited back in Phase 1 but whose parents have made the decision to keep them at home. However, please be aware that all class teachers will be leading groups of children in school during Phase 1 so they may not be able to respond to your emails immediately.

### **Some possible questions you may have...**

Q: Will my child be taught by their class teacher?

A: As we have been told to split groups and limit each bubble size to 15, your child may not be taught by their class teacher.

Q: What happens if I have children in more than one year group?

A: Only the children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 can attend in Phase 1. We will let you know once further decisions have been made about Phase 2.

Q: if I have a child in Reception and a child in Year 1, can I bring them in at the same time or do I have to wait in the playground or outside the school?

A: If you have siblings, you can bring both/all children at the earliest of the given times, ie Reception starts at 9am and Year 1 starts at 9:30am but you would be allowed to bring both children in at 9:00am

Q: I am a key worker and I have a child in Year 1. Will he/she attend the key worker group or the Year 1 group?

A: He/she will attend the Year 1 group. However, any siblings not in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6 will attend the key worker group.

Q: I am a key worker and I have a child in Reception. Will he/she be able to stay at school until 3:30pm?

A: Yes, they will stay within their bubble with the adult until collection at 3:30pm. The rest of the children from that bubble will have left at their given end of day time.

Q: If the teacher responsible for my child's bubble is absent, who will lead the group?

A: We will endeavour to minimise this as much as possible however, any teacher cover will be taken by one of our experienced Teaching Assistants known to your child. They will deliver curriculum content planned, managed and overseen by a teacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Q: Am I expected to provide my child with a packed lunch?

A: A hot meal choice will be available. It is your choice whether you provide your child with a packed lunch or choose this option.

I am aware that this is a lot of information to think about. If you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to call the school and speak to one of the senior leaders (Sue, Connor or Me). We will be in contact after the weekend to ask parents and carers of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children if they intend to send their children back on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June (if that is when we re-open) as well as to ask if you require school meals, and further surveys will be sent out to the wider school once we are closer to Phase 2.

I hope you are all keeping safe and well, and that we will see you all soon.

Best Wishes,

Andrew

### Application for Key Worker Childcare Provision

Please complete this form and **return it to Sharon** [shall@wtwschool.co.uk](mailto:shall@wtwschool.co.uk) if you are a key worker and you would require a place at our school from 1<sup>st</sup> June (and you have not been using this provision so far). Where key workers have a partner who is working from home, we would not usually expect to provide school services.

| To be completed if you require a place at school  |  |
|---|--|
| Name of your child/ren  |  |
| Year group/s  |  |
| Name of parents and carers  |  |
| Emergency contact names and telephone numbers   |  |
| Reason for requiring a place (please tick as appropriate)   |  |
| My child has an EHCP  |  |
| My child has a social worker  |  |
| I consider myself to be a key worker and am not able to provide alternative arrangements<br><br>Name of role:<br><br>Name of organisation:                        |  |
| I consider that I have need of emergency care for my child for another reason (this will be considered on a case by case basis)<br><br>Please specify the reason: |  |