

Thursday, 21 May 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

Proposed phased return to school – from 1 June

I would like to thank you all for your patience; I apologise that I have not been able to confirm the school's response to reopening before now. The situation is incredibly complex – particularly so at Kingsway – and discussions have taken place long into the night.

Since I wrote last, we have been in constant discussion with head teacher groups, the local authority and the Department for Education (DfE). Some of these groups are also in close collaboration with unions who are voicing significant concerns about schools' ability to implement these measures in a way that are both practical and achieve the aim of supporting pupils' well-being. Whilst the current landscape is still changing and there is considerable concern from a number of parties, we are continuing to plan a return to school **from 1 June** as required by the DfE.

It is very apparent from discussions with others that some models work in certain settings but not in others. The demands upon schools are so very different and relate to their staffing, children and community need.

When considering our approach, we have applied national and local guidance with diligence and have also taken on board the guiding principles which relate to the health, safety and well-being of all. To ensure we can do this effectively and make adjustments as we go, we are intending to take a staged approach to reopening starting the week commencing 1 June.

We are acutely aware of many parents' and teachers' views on the proposal to reopen: many are anxious and, having isolated for a long time, this feels like a big step. We have done all we can to support our staff as well as considering the safest provision we can offer to the children and families of Kingsway. Throughout the lockdown, Kingsway Primary School has remained open, every day including holidays and bank holidays. Like many of you, our school teams have balanced their work roles with that anxiety of putting themselves at risk to provide continued support to families in need; I am truly thankful to them, and to you too, for all that has been done. In addition, the Governing Body has been a constant source of support, challenge and guidance: please be assured that they are fully aware of the decisions we are taking.

Frequently Asked Questions

Attached to this letter are many frequently asked questions (FAQs). These may change over time as guidance and provision also change. If you have a question that supports others' understanding, this will be included in the FAQs. So, keep asking and we'll do our best to answer. All information will be published on the school website for later reference and updated as the landscape changes. Having spoken with many parents, I know you understand the very challenging circumstances we face together. I thank you for your understanding and support and ask that you communicate with us openly and freely during this period so that we can do the best to help you, and your children as well as maintaining our health.



Should I send my child to school?

The guidance is that if you can, you should. But, this is a very personal decision based on your individual circumstances. One major problem with the modelling process is that we are told we must cater for *all* children who *may* wish to access the school's support. We therefore need to plan for the *possibility* of all 60 children attending from reception, year 1 and from our key worker group – each having 60 children. Catering for 180 children (not including the nursery) in bubbles of 15 hugely reduces our offer to other year groups. We have been told that we *must* prioritise the youngest years first: reception, followed by year 1 and only then year 6. I genuinely hope this guidance changes as we wish to support year 6 particularly at this time of transition. The government is keen that all children will return to school for at least a month before the end of the academic year. For this to happen, significant guidance changes are needed. At this point, the school's capacity is 180 pupils – we cannot accept any more.

Who will start and when?

We have worked through a number of models for our site. The best way of providing the safest and widest provision is by creating separate 'bubbles' with a break in the middle. This approach is commonly applied across both Cheltenham and Gloucester schools. We will split each year into two separate groups: Bubble 1 will come to school on Monday and Tuesday; Bubble 2 will come to school on Thursday and Friday.

We will assign your child to a bubble to attend and will consider your views if you feel this really will not work for you. We kindly request you recognise the complexity of managing these groups and understand that there will be little flexibility in what we can offer. The Key Nursery will develop a separate bubble system based which will be communicated separately. You will be told of your child's bubble soon.

Our current timetable is:

Please note: We hope not to change this, but it may be necessary if national / local decision change.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
w/c 1 June*	Key Worker Group / vulnerable and EHCP children's groups can access school all week				

*Our provision will remain the same in this week as it is currently – we are able to provide wrap around care as usual.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
w/c 8 June	Reception Bubble 1	Reception Bubble 1	Deep Clean/PPA/ Home learning provision	Reception Bubble 2	Reception Bubble 2
	Key Worker Group / vulnerable and EHCP children's groups can access school all week				

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
w/c 15 June	Reception Bubble 1	Reception Bubble 1	Deep Clean/PPA/ Home learning provision	Reception Bubble 2	Reception Bubble 2
	Year 1 Bubble 1	Year 1 Bubble 1	Deep Clean/PPA/ Home learning provision	Year 1 Bubble 2	Year 1 Bubble 2
	Key Worker Group / vulnerable and EHCP children's groups can access school all week – wrap around care to start for Key Worker Group only (from 8am to 5.30pm)				

During the week commencing 15 June, we hope to be able to provide additional capacity for Year 6. We are keen to establish Year 6 provision as soon as we are able.

What do I do now?

If you are a key worker, or a parent of a child in nursery, reception, year 1 or year 6 complete the survey by 12 noon on Monday, 25 May so that we can begin to set up bubbles.

We need to know if you are sending your child in to school or not. Please note: key workers can only access one bubble. So, you will need to choose if they are in class and will have only 2 days' provision or if they are in a key worker group that can provide wrap around care and up to 5 days' provision. They cannot change bubble once they have come to school.

Thank you for the time taken to read and understand this letter. Please email if you need any help understanding any elements.

With kindness and best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Pajak', written in a cursive style.

Lee Pajak
Headteacher