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Headteacher: Brett Stevenson

Dear Parents,

Parents of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 Pupils School Re-opening Arrangements – 1st June 2020

I hope that you and those close to you, are well. It seems that we have all become rather used to the 'lockdown', and I know that this is possibly a stressful time, as work and life balances are sometimes difficult to juggle.

You will no doubt be aware that the Government wish to employ a 'phased approach' to opening up English primary schools, starting the week beginning June 1st. The Government has issued strict guidance for schools to use in planning and implementing how we do this safely, which is now a sharp focus for us working at school.

You will also appreciate that there is a lot of speculation surrounding what school life will be like. Some of this is possibly accurate, some of it is unhelpful. I cannot be certain at this stage what the daily routines at school will look like, but I think it would be useful to inform you our key principles behind the guidance. Please forgive my rather 'direct' approach.

Social Distancing

I am sure that you will agree that it is nearly impossible to keep Reception and Year 1 children to be separate from each other, at the distance we are all now familiar with – 2 metres. The guidance recognises this and only stipulates *wherever it is possible*. This is especially difficult for the younger children in a class setting, but will be enforced as rigorously as we can. Desks will be 2 metres apart, and only one child per desk. The learning through play activities will be restricted. Firstly, there are hygiene considerations for shared equipment, and secondly, most children learn through play with a partner. The pupils will have an allocated set of resources. Within the classroom toys and resources will be restricted, but we will endeavour to make the experience of being in school as exciting as possible and there will be lots of opportunities for learning outdoors.

Each child will be in a 'bubble'. In other words, they will stay with that group for the whole day. This includes breaktimes and lunchtimes. Each group will be facilitated by either a teacher or their usual Teaching Assistant. This measure is designed to reduce the possibility of transmission of COVID - 19 within the school to potentially just a small group if infection were to occur. Each group will be taught in their allocated space. It may mean that your child is not taught in their usual classroom. This is being implemented to maximise the use of all of our learning space, and increase the possibility of enforcing the 2 metre rule.

The nature of the work given to the children will also reflect the need for as little direct contact with the children as can be reasonably expected. Activities will focus more on independent learning.

If a child becomes distressed or injures themselves, we will of course attend to them if we judge that closer contact is in their best interests. In the case of injury, staff will use PPE equipment, which is standard practice anyway – although we have never used masks before.

Lunchtime

Your child will need a packed lunch. They will sit with their group and adult. If your child is entitled to a lunch provided by the school, it will be a packed lunch.

Access Arrangements

We are unsure of the exact demand for places at school, but it is likely to be lower than anticipated, as people exercise their right not to send their child into school.

We will not be allowing parents into the school. We will be using different entrances, for different groups of pupils. The children will be allowed onto the site at their given time (see later) and then escorted into the building by their teacher / adult.

We will expect everyone to observe the 2 metre rule whilst waiting to drop off their children and pick them up. If this is not the case, you will be politely reminded. If we judge this as being ignored, then we will take advice as how to enforce it more strongly.

Uniform

The guidance asks that all children should wear freshly laundered clothes every day.

We will expect uniform to be worn by the children, but understand that it might not be possible to provide clean uniform daily. Non - uniform may be worn on those occasions. This will need to be a sensible choice, appropriate for work and play in school. Our policy on jewellery and hair styles remain the same.

Gatherings

Currently there are no plans for normal school events, eg Sports Day, Leavers, Assembly, the Summer 'Fun Day' / Fete.

Timetable

Thank you to the majority of people who have been kind enough to complete the survey I sent out last week. At the end of this letter I would like everyone to use the link to go to another short survey, which will give us further indication of the number of children that we need to plan for. However, it seems probable that we will be opening on Monday, Tuesday Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday, the school will not be open for Reception, Y1 and Y6 children, which gives the chance for staff to plan for all of the children, including those still at home.

We may well ask the different groups to start and finish at different times of the morning and afternoon. This is unlikely to have a significant impact on your daily routines, and we will only organise as such, if we need to.

Best Practice

If we suspect that your child may have symptoms of COVID-19, then we will follow the guidance which we have been given, including the wearing of masks, and asking for your child and family to self isolate for 14 days. It goes without saying that we expect everybody in our school community respects this, and is vigilant with regards to any suspected symptoms with other family members.

Rainbow School

Please note, the arrangements for parents of those children attending school at Blakeney recently, remain largely unchanged. However, the guidance means that if your child has been attending Blakeney School during the lockdown, they may be taught separately to the rest of their year group, and remain in the Rainbow Group. This will be especially relevant if your child will not be attending full time. This is to minimise the risk of infection as far as possible. It is yet to be finalised where the Rainbow Group will be based.

Finally

I have been teaching for nearly 30 years, and I feel very sad that these measures, and possibly more, have to be put in place. I must stress that whilst we put all of the advice into practical steps, I cannot guarantee that we can stop anybody from becoming infected. It is our wish, that following the guidance being followed as closely as possible, we remain as safe as we can. We may well change some of our processes, as we come to terms with a challenging new way of working.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any questions or suggestions. In the meantime please also complete the online survey found at the end of this letter.

Best wishes,



Brett Stevenson
Headteacher

REQUIRED	Please Click on the link:	
Blakeney	Reception	https://s.surveypplanet.com/tIdzAcn5I
Blakeney	Year 1	https://s.surveypplanet.com/UbFbz6I27
Blakeney	Year 6	https://s.surveypplanet.com/0o_Z50ygz

