

Highfield Update for parents May 19th 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I want to get as much information to you as possible as I am sure you have many, many questions you would like to ask regarding school and how we intend to open after half term and most importantly how we intend to keep the children as safe as possible.

This is a long letter with lots of information and I make no apologies for that. I am also sending to **all parents** because at some point (I don't know when) I am sure all our children will return to school.

At the moment all our critical worker parents are informing school of their decision to send their children back on 2nd June or keep them at home.

I then intend to open school for all our Reception children from Thursday 4th June. **Depending on numbers and spaces** I will then invite all year 1 children to join us possibly from Monday 8th June. Finally, **and only if we have spaces**, I will invite all Year 6 children to return to school possibly from Wednesday 10th June. I am sorry I cannot absolutely guarantee dates and spaces at the moment because parents will not have made up their minds and may indeed change their minds.

We hope to have spaces for around 195 – 210 children but again this can change and is dependent on staff, several of whom are currently trying to seek advice from their doctors as to whether or not they can return to work.

I am now asking all our Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 parents to inform the school office if you will DEFINITELY NOT be sending your child back to school before the summer holidays. If you are undecided then please do not reply.

If you are not a critical worker and your child is in years 2 3 4 or 5 **you have not been forgotten**. Our Seesaw offer will continue. We cannot enhance the offer because we will have less staff able to run it after the half term holidays. This is because more staff are needed in school to teach the small classes, known as **'bubbles'**

Now for lots of information to explain how school will look and be run.

Health and Safety

- A First aid risk assessment has been written and a designated first aider in the work place plus a pediatric first aider **are** on site every day. In addition, all teachers have an up to date first aid certificate.
- All persons who are displaying symptoms **MUST NOT** come into school and should follow Government guidance on self isolating.
- Persons whose family members are displaying symptoms of Coronavirus must follow Government guidance regarding self isolating.
- All persons who develop Coronavirus symptoms, however mild should be sent home as soon as possible and they should then follow government guidance on self-isolating and testing. They should self-isolate for 7 days and their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and pupils who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus.
- Whilst awaiting pick up persons will be isolated in a separate area with a closed door. Pupils will need to be supervised whilst this takes place
- An IIR face mask will be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a IIR face mask will be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting or vomiting, then eye protection will also be worn.
- Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.
- Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their "bubble" will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

- As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger number of other children, young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole site or year group. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.
- If a member of staff has helped someone who was unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or the pupil or staff member subsequently tests positive. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.
- Areas where those staff or pupils have been will be thoroughly cleaned.
- Staff will socially distance from each other (2 meters) at all times.
- **Fire plans and drill.** The evacuation routes have not changed. 8 of the 13 bubbles have immediate access to the playground. The other 5 bubbles have the same exit routes as we use normally. The muster point remains on the ball court although lines to socially distanced and will therefore spill onto the fields. We will have a fire drill in the first week in June and then again when the other year groups join us.
- Each teacher of bubble of children will have a list of medical and allergy information
- Safeguarding procedures continue as normal

Extra Cleaning and virus prevention

- There will be an additional cleaner in school **all day** cleaning and disinfecting key touch areas, equipment, toys etc. being used by the children and staff.
- Most doors downstairs will be wedged open to prevent spread of virus. Upstairs classroom doors and entrance to toilets are wedged open. Fire doors upstairs are kept closed and will be cleaned by the additional cleaner after every movement by children.
- New bins with lids and foot pedals have been purchased for every room in the building. They will be emptied frequently throughout the day.
- Play equipment in Reception and year 1 will be washed/spray cleaned at the end of each day by the cleaners.
- Children have their own equipment in a zipped plastic bag which will stay on their own desk in their bubble.
- No toys or equipment will be allowed from home other than a lunchbox.
- All soft furnishings/fabric resources have been removed from classrooms. All equipment that is too fiddly to clean and spray with our disinfectant has been removed.
- Excess furniture in classrooms has been removed to the school hall.
- **No** more than 3 children may enter the toilets at a time.
- Each bubble will be assigned its own toilet to use.
- Toilets will be cleaned more frequently throughout the day by the additional cleaner we have employed.

The "Bubbles" (classrooms)

This is what the bubbles are currently looking like as we prepare for just 15 children in each class. Final preparation and the Reception and Year 1 Bubbles are being set up next week in the half term holidays. The children will know the name of their bubble teacher when they first arrive in school on their first day. We are trying as much as we can to assign staff to the year groups they normally teach in but of course some staff are unable to return to school for health reasons.



- Tape will be put on the floor in the teacher zone and no child will be allowed to enter this zone. We will also be taping the stairs and the corridors at 2 meter intervals. The children will be taught how to move safely around the school although they will rarely leave their bubble (except for playtimes).
- No reading books or book bags may come into school or be sent home. In fact nothing other than packed lunch and water bottle and coat can come into school.
- No homework can be sent home or returned.
- Teachers will give verbal feedback and make notes in their record books of children's progress.
- We expect and hope to have a teacher in every bubble. Where this is not possible, a teacher will have an oversight of any Teaching assistants who may have to supervise a bubble. This is following DfE guidance
- Children will not have formal PE lessons and will stay in their uniforms all day
- The children will have longer play times and as many opportunities as possible to be physically active and take their learning outside to their own play bubbles.
- Children will keep coats on the backs of their chairs (pegs in reception) and their lunchboxes under their tables (shelf in reception).
- There is no expectation that school offer the full national curriculum and a curriculum as broad as we would offer at Highfield
- There will be lots of: play and physical activity opportunities, PSHE lessons to help them deal with the situation and how school and life feels different, (Transition lessons for Year 6), singing songs, performance poetry, story times, phonics, reading, maths, writing, topic work and art.
- School reports will be a simplified version and will be e-mailed to all parents in July.
- Children with SEND will be supported as far as is possible within their bubble. Mrs. McVeigh is communicating with all our children who have an Education, health and care plan and discussing the provision for these children on an individual basis.
- We cannot provide individual speech and language intervention at the moment due to social distancing rules.

Communication with school and the school office

- Attendance and registers are taken as normal each morning and afternoon. Children will be expected to attend school every day and be punctual.
- No-one should not enter the main office or office area unless absolutely necessary.
- Late pupils will go directly to their bubble via the outside doors
- All communications with the office need to be by phone or email (admin@highfield.leeds.sch.uk). Do not enter the office please communicate with the office through the hatch or from the door threshold.
- Parents will only be able to come into the school by appointment and can only collect their children during the day by prior appointment.
- Lunchtimes. The children will all have one hour for lunch. They will eat in their bubbles for the first half hour. Parents will be invited to choose between sending a packed lunch or requesting a school Grab Bag lunch option. The Grab Bag lunch option menu is attached to this letter. All children in Reception, year 1 and year 2 are entitled to a universal free school lunch. Key stage 2 parents can send their own packed lunch or choose to buy a Grab Bag lunch. The price remains £2.40 per day. The school office will send out a form for you to complete, starting with the critical workers.

- The children will play in their special play bubble for the second half hour. Play bubble areas will be cordoned off with tape. We will be using all parts of the school playgrounds and field to cordon off these play bubbles. The children will be supervised as normal by the lunchtime team and support staff.

School day staggered times

- Only one parent should bring their child to school. All three school entrances will be opened at 8.50 a.m.
- Children will line up in year groups using markers on the playground and social distancing. Parents will then be asked to leave the playground avoiding social gathering. The children will then be called by the teacher of their bubble and will walk into school. The children will be showed where to line up for the following day.
- All critical worker children in years 4 5 and 6 - 8.55 - 3.30
- All critical worker children in years 2 and 3 - 9.05 - 3.20
- Reception children 9.30 - 3.00
- Year 1 children 9.15 - 3.15
- At the designated home-times, parent may enter the playground and socially distance on the playground to collect their children.
- If you have children in two or more year groups with different start and end times please if possible can you use the latest start time and the earliest finish time. If this is not possible please contact the school office.

Cancelled until further notice – trips and residentials, transition visits to High Schools in July, visitors into school, assemblies, concerts, school based clubs, sporting events, sports days, sports competitions, swimming lessons, PTA events, volunteers in school.

As you can see, planning the safe reopening of a school requires many changes and they will not suit everyone. However, I have followed all the government guidelines and tried to make the plan as safe as possible. I believe the children will adapt really well because they are Highfield children and they are great. I also totally respect your decision as to whether you wish to take up the offer of a place or not.

We must also remember that the government can stop the phased reopening of schools in June should the virus numbers begin to grow. They will give schools 48 hours' notice should this be the case.

I will send out more clarification regarding numbers and confirmation of the start dates for Reception, year 1 and year 6 after the half term holidays

Stay safe

Julie Colley