



Stanley Crook Primary School

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OUR MISSION: TO TRY OUR BEST, TO TELL THE TRUTH, TO LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER AND THE COMMUNITY

"Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is OUTSTANDING" (Ofsted, 2019)

11.06.20

Information on School Organisation and Strategy for 2020/21 Transition and Academic Year

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you once again for continued patience and support throughout this challenging time.

Ordinarily, this period of the school year would be the point at which parents/ carers are provided with information regarding school organisation for the new academic year, including which Team their child will be in come September. However, due to current challenges and the unprecedented nature of the present situation, this will not be possible.

Despite detailed plans having been established for the wider reopening of school to pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, significant additional pressure for places from families who are key workers - and our desire to continue to provide invaluable support to those children who are most vulnerable within our community - is severely testing our staffing capacity and limited physical space in school. Over the last week, demand for school places from key worker families has increased substantially so that in school there are now three 'bubbles' in operation. Government guidance limits numbers of pupils in each 'bubble' to 15; however, due to limited space, the need to meet criteria set out in the various school risk assessments and government guidance itself, maximum numbers at our school have been set lower than this, with 'Bubble 3' – as a result of location in school – being strictly limited to just 10 children. It is unlikely at this time that provision in school will be able to exceed a maximum of three 'bubbles'.

As a direct result of this limited staff capacity, increased pupil numbers from key worker and vulnerable groups and the need to effectively manage risk assessments alongside government and local guidance, it is now extremely unlikely that school will be in a position to open up further to pupils from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, before the summer. A phased reopening to these year groups had initially been planned for June 22nd – however, this decision was always dependent upon our ability to safely and effectively manage the move to accommodating ever increasing pupil numbers.

The policy announcement published by the government on Tuesday acknowledges the practical and very real challenges leaders are (and have been) facing in terms of carrying out a wider reopening of school, while at the same time meeting the current guidance. The new policy, of reversing the expectation for all primary pupils to be back at school before the summer, not only acknowledges these difficulties but also provides schools with flexibility in their response to wider reopening. The safety and wellbeing of our pupils, staff, families and wider community continues to be priority.

Consequently, it remains extremely unlikely also that school will have the necessary capacity – under current guidance – to welcome back our pupils in Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 or Year 5 prior to the summer.

The prolonged period of this current situation is extremely frustrating for everyone connected to our school. A full return to school for our pupils is what everyone desires – however, this appears to be some way off with any increases to pupil numbers needing to be managed in a safe and measured way. Comfort and confidence can be drawn from the high level of engagement of our families through home learning tasks and activities, the high level of contact maintained between staff and families with regards mental health and wellbeing support and the effectiveness of ongoing in-school provision to safeguard and protect our most vulnerable children. The response of our school community throughout this crisis has been a tremendous T.E.A.M. effort, despite the huge range of challenges we have all faced.

School will continue to adhere to this undertaking and are committed to communicating with all members of our school community in a supportive and transparent way.

In order to open the school to more pupils, a vast set of tasks to enable wider reopening requires to be completed including various and detailed risk assessments. Some examples of the content of these are provided below:

1. Consider constraints on physical space to remap the school for one way systems and social distancing.
2. Consider the availability of staff and particularly those who are self-isolating or in vulnerable categories.
3. Obtain PPE, cleaning products, new signage and barrier screening and train staff in the use of new products and systems. Cleaners, for example, need to be trained to safely manage new ways of working and enhanced sanitisation systems as well as prevention of cross infection. We cannot and would not ask our staff to undertake tasks for which they are not properly trained and confident to undertake, particularly where a risk of infection exists.
4. Refresh all relevant school risk assessments and other health and safety procedures for infectious disease control, fire protection, water safety, maintenance and servicing, cleaning and caretaking regimes.
5. Ensure all areas of our provision are 'Covid Secure' and meet detailed requirements set down by Public Health England, the Department for Education and Local Authority.
6. Consult with multiple Unions to ensure that our plans meet their expectations for safe working practices for their members.

Alongside this, broader strategy is also being developed to include curriculum planning and how provision will be delivered to enable our children to revisit any learning missed; organisation of Teams for 2020/21 academic year; staffing; timetabling of the school week and – possibly most importantly – transition planning in order to provide a period of time for children from all year groups to settle back into school and to prepare for their move to a new Team, meet their new Teacher/ Teaching Assistant and get to know new friends.

Due to the uncertain nature and significant challenge schools are facing as a result of the Coronavirus/ COVID-19 pandemic, it is difficult to provide any guarantees as to what our school – including its organisation and provision – will look like over the next few months and at the start of the new academic year in September. Planning at every level of school is being based on several possible scenarios, which are building into organisation, risk assessments and several other contingency plans. This is not an easy task – however, at the centre of every decision which is being taken regarding strategic planning, the wellbeing of our children, families and school community is our priority.

Across the recent debate regarding wider school reopening, much of the focus has been placed on children currently in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. There has been very little discussion surrounding children in other year groups or indeed, new starters - who will be starting school for the very first time in September. While no one can provide a guarantee of provision and plans for September, I – along with senior leaders and governors at school – would like to attempt to provide a degree of transparency in relation to our initial thoughts and plans moving forward. It is hoped that, by sharing these, parents/ carers will feel more informed of our plans and feel slightly more reassured of how the remainder of this school year may look – as well as how the new academic year may begin.

Moving forward to September and the start of the new academic year, it is highly likely that schooling will continue to look very different to the 'norm'. More detail of these initial thoughts and plans are included below. However, please be assured that these plans are not set and will depend on many variables beyond our control and may, therefore, be subject to change.

The most important factor regarding a return to school in September will be to provide effective and targeted support to pupils to enable them to successfully and confidently return to school. Mental health and wellbeing will be at the forefront of provision throughout this initial return and will extend well into the new school year. Stanley Crook Primary School has always been committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment where pupils' mental health and wellbeing supersedes academic progress. If children do not feel secure, safe, happy and confident, they will find learning difficult and struggle to reach their potential. In this current climate, our already well-established ethos and values around this provision is an enormous positive for our school and a great strength – these values are already embedded within school and are threaded through the very fabric of all that we do.

An effective programme of transition is going to be extremely important. Everyone at school is determined to ensure that a return to school – in whatever form that may be – provides each child with the security, confidence and success they need to carry on into the new academic year.

Therefore, initial plans for a return to school in September include (but are not limited to) the following options:

- **Pupils will return to school in their current Teams:** This will provide all children will familiarity and security through returning to their Team, which they know and already have established relationships within.
- **Part-time timetables for some pupils:** Due to the possibility of government guidance still being in force, it may be necessary to implement part-time timetables for pupils in order to provide enough capacity to enable all pupils – across all year groups – to safely return to school.

- **For existing pupils, school will reopen following the summer break on Wednesday 2nd September:** Children will return to school on this date, in their current Teams and begin to settle back into school. Work and activities will be primarily focused on mental health and wellbeing and will provide pupils an opportunity to sensitively reintroduce themselves into the routines of school (current plans regarding our current Year 6 pupils are that they will begin immediately at their new secondary schools – more detail on this is provided further in this information).
- **For existing pupils, the period between 2nd September and 12th September (2 weeks) will also be focused on transition:** This two-week period will provide opportunities to also plan for transition to new Teams. Children will also have opportunities to meet their new teacher/ teaching assistant and participate in activities in their new classroom.
- **Existing pupils will transition to their new Teams from Monday 15th September:** Following a two-week 'settling in' period, which will have included much work on mental health and wellbeing – as well as transition planning and activities – pupils will formally move to their new Teams.
- **New Reception cohort will begin at school on Monday 15th September:** After existing pupils have been successfully reintroduced to school and transition has been completed, school will welcome our new Reception cohort on a phased basis. Reception pupils will initially attend school for half-days (each morning) for two days per week. This is in order to restrict numbers in Team Donaldson and to provide a measured and secure start to schooling for our very youngest pupils. This timetable will also allow a deep clean of the classroom and resources. During this induction period, similar support sessions and information for parents will also be provided. More detail on this will be provided to parents/ carers of pupils in our new 2020 Reception cohort in the coming weeks.

At present, it appears that secondary schools are proceeding with their plans for transition support for our current Year 6 pupils – although, much of this support is being provided virtually.

There are no secondary school transition visits planned for the remainder of this school year. Parents of pupils in Year 6 will continue to be contacted directly by their child's secondary school transition team. Miss Williams and Miss Rowcroft have been working closely with the various secondary 'feeder' schools to provide them with as much information as possible in order to ensure transition is successful.

Upon a return to school in September, we will liaise closely with the various secondary schools in order to coordinate a date where children are released from school to return to Stanley Crook and enjoy their Year 6 Leavers Assembly. More details will be forwarded to parents closer to the time.

I do hope that this information has provided a small degree of clarity and reassurance to parents/ carers – not only those who have children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, but to those who have children in other year groups and our 2020 Reception cohort. These plans are only initial ideas of possible actions, which could be taken. None of us know what the situation may be in September and so these plans could change – depending on the public health situation, the level of risk at that time and government guidance. Throughout the summer, contact will be maintained with our school community on our plans for opening in September and any changes to guidance which may affect this.

Please be reassured that any decision which is taken at school regarding wider school re-opening and plans for the new academic year in September, will be taken after considering carefully the benefit and support of provision for all of our pupils' safety – and mental health and wellbeing.

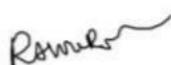
So that parents/ carers are aware of which Team their child will be in for the 2020/21 academic year – following any period of reintroduction and transition, as detailed above – information relating to school organisation will be published at the beginning of July.

Meantime, thank you again for your continued support during this time

Stay safe.



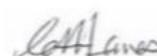
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Mrs R. Wilkinson
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Mrs D. Martin
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Mrs C. Lawes
Chair of
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SCHOOL
MEMBER

