

**Bridgemere CE Primary School**

Bridgemere Lane

Nantwich

Cheshire

CW5 7PX

Tel 01270 520271

Tuesday 2nd June 2020

Dear Parents/carers,

**RE: Phased reopening of schools**

I am writing to provide a further update regarding the re-opening of Bridgemere CE Primary School. I firstly wish to thank everyone who responded to the survey which was distributed. Your responses were very helpful in supporting some of the decisions the governors and myself have had to make.

As you will recall the Government’s response to the wider opening of primary schools was that the key worker’s children and vulnerable children would take priority before further year groups returned. There was then a priority order: Nursery, Reception, Year 1 followed by Year 6 from 1st June.

Having reviewed our staffing capacity, measured classroom sizes and discussed the numbers of key workers’ children and vulnerable children already requiring places, it is impossible for us to take any children from Nursery or Year 6 at this time. The school will only be open to the current key workers’ children and vulnerable children already in attendance and for those few children in Reception and Year 1 who have responded to the survey saying their children will return. The guidance is absolutely clear that we should not rotate staff around the different pods. Additionally, our classrooms can only hold between 8-10 children based on the 2m social distancing measure.

The school will therefore operate 3 pods, 2 of which will be for key workers’ children and the vulnerable children and 1 pod for Reception and Year1 children. Please note some children in these pods will not be with their usual classteacher. There will be staggered arrival and collection times for these pods. All parents with children returning to school will receive a separate email before the end of the week confirming your child’s pod number, classteacher, arrival and departure times.

For some of our parents it will be disappointing that your children cannot attend school, but our absolute priority has to be everyone’s safety at this difficult time. However, it is also worth noting that our current plans may need to be revised in light of any further guidance from the Government such as a reduction in the social distancing for example.

In the meantime, our teachers will continue to set the remote learning opportunities, encouraging access to the National Oak Academy sessions which provides some very useful lessons for our pupils to access.

The Acton hub will continue to operate up until the 15th June for all of our key workers’ children and vulnerable children who require places.

If you are a key worker requesting a new place for your child, you **must** send an email to the school first and attach a letter from your employer stating you are a key worker. You **must not** send your child to school unless you have received a confirmation email with an agreed date.

We will be offering our Year 6 pupils the opportunity to have some form of closure to their primary education. This will take place in July and this is currently being planned by senior leaders. I will write again to the parents of our Year 6 pupils with further details nearer the time.

The governors have decided that Bridgemere schools would reduce to a 1 week holiday at Whit. This means school will close on Tuesday 21st July 2020. The rationale behind this is based on the fact that some children have been in school every day, including bank holidays, since the 23rd March, additionally staff have continued to work on a rota system every week, whilst writing reports and setting remote learning opportunities and like many of our parents, have had to juggle teaching their own children alongside their jobs. It was also felt the school would be best in line with other schools at this time and gives everyone slightly more time to perhaps, if possible, re-schedule holidays that may have had to have been postponed. We are aware that some parents may have had plans for this week and if they can be fulfilled, we would encourage you to continue with those plans. The remote learning can always be picked up a week later.

It is worth highlighting at this point there have **not** been any decisions about school during the Summer holiday period and equally what school will look like in September. I have provided some challenge to the DfE, particularly about September, as it would be helpful for all stakeholders to have some idea of what school may look like at that time.

Below I have attached some additional FAQs along with the previous questions so all parents have a clear view of what school will be like upon your child’s return.

As stated in my previous communication, I appreciate this is a difficult time for all of our families, children and staff and fully empathise with the anxiety that exists. We are currently setting up an area on our website about returning to school where all documentation can be found. The risk assessment will be added once approved at the next governors’ meeting.

Kindest regards

Beverley Dolman Elizabeth Ford

Beverley Dolman Elizabeth Ford

Executive Headteacher Chair of Governors

**Real Life Learning Academy Trust**

**Frequently Answered Questions**

***How will we arrive and depart from school?***

We will stagger drop-off and collection times in order to observe social distancing rules. Parents
will be informed of their drop-off and collection time by the end of this week. Times **MUST** be adhered to.

If driving, parents/carers are asked to enter the car park and use it like a “drive thru”. Parents will drop off their children at the gate, where they will be met by Mrs Middleton. The children will then walk to the playground observing the 2m markings as they enter school. The playground will be supervised and staff will meet children at the outside classroom doors.

On collection, parents are asked to park and then make their way to the playground observing the 2m taped lines to the drop zone and then form a queue. The children will be brought to you. Parents are then asked to exit via the school field and across the staff car park, maintaining a 2m gap at all times. The one-way system will ensure limited contact with other families.

Under no circumstances should parents enter the building or gather at the school gates, or in the car park.

***What will happen at lunch and break times?***

We will be staggering break and lunchtimes so that the ‘pods’ are not mixing together or moving around the school at the same time.

Each pod has been allocated a designated play space.
Movement around the school will be restricted in order to reduce the risk of contact.

Supervision at break and lunchtime will be by support staff.

Children will eat their lunch in their pod bases before moving outside together to their designated area. Support staff will collect hot lunches and bring them to the designated pod. Children bringing in their own lunch must do so in a small disposable bag. **No lunch boxes please. All children will require their own water bottle.**

***Will my child have to wear school uniform?***We would like children to wear warm, practical clothing with shoes that they can fasten
themselves. This may be school uniform but does not have to be. It is most important to reduce
the chance of infection that you send your child in to school in **clean clothes each day** they
are in school and wash all clothes at the end of the school day and we realise this would be
difficult for some parents if we enforced school uniform.

Please note no school bags must be brought onto site and coats must only be brought in when the weather requires this.

***What about PE?***

Each pod will undertake their Active 30 session each day. There will be no extra PE sessions. It is expected that this session will be undertaken outside. If the session cannot run outside, it will not take place. This is to avoid each pod using the hall which would need to be cleaned after each pod’s use.
Children need to be wearing appropriate clothing for exercise that they can wear all day. We do not want children changing in school and bringing in extra clothing.

***How will the children be grouped and what will the classroom look like?***

There will be three pods in operation. Two pods set up for key workers’ children and vulnerable children and one pod for Reception/Year 1 pupils. These pods will be of a maximum of 8-10 children across the classrooms. This is to ensure that we strictly adhere to the 2m social distancing advice when setting out our desks.

Each pod will have its own base, teacher and play space outside. Each pod will be kept separate from all of the others and pupils and adults will stay with the same pod throughout. The children will not necessarily be with the teacher or teaching assistant that they were with before schools closed. The layout of our classrooms will change. There will be less furniture in the classrooms, desks will be either separate or in a “U shape” and children may not be in the classroom they are used to.

Free movement or play will be restricted.

***How will you keep the children apart?***It is widely accepted that social distancing in schools is nearly impossible, especially for our
youngest pupils. We will endeavour to keep all of our children 2m apart, however there is no guarantee we can do this.

Desks will be separated and children will be given their own desk space, writing equipment and resources to reduce contamination.

***How will you reduce the risk of infection for my child in school?***A comprehensive risk assessment has been produced to inform us of all the measures we
can take and we will respond to any new guidance and scientific information that we are given
immediately. The guidance is clear in stating that it is not recommended for staff to wear PPE – staff will not as a general rule wear face masks, gloves, etc. However, there are times where they will, for example, if they are supervising children who are ill/showing symptoms in school (whilst we wait for parents to collect), undertaking first aid on a child, or if it is necessary for a member of staff to come into very close contact with a child.
Children will work in ‘pods’ which will not be in contact with another pod.
Movement in classrooms and around the school will be restricted in order to reduce the risk of contact.
No personal items will be allowed in school other than a water bottle, lunch in a disposable bag, coat if required.

Very frequent hand washing and sanitising of surfaces will take place (children will be
encouraged to help keep their own area clean), the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ slogan will be
stressed (bins will be emptied throughout the day). New pedestal bins have been purchased for all areas.
Each classroom will be cleaned by a cleaner at the end of every day and a fogger will be used on Fridays after school has closed.
Sinks for handwashing or hand sanitiser will be available in every classroom.
Rooms will be as well ventilated as possible with doors and windows open (even if it is cold).
We will be aiming to do as much outdoor learning as possible since being outdoors carries less risk of infection.
A comprehensive cleaning schedule has been devised and is being discussed with our cleaners, staff and caretaker. This will be populated onto the website once confirmed.

***What if my child needs the toilet?***

Only 2 children will be allowed in the toilets at any one time. Children will only be allowed in with another child from their pod. The disabled toilet will be used if in the event of an emergency and a child cannot wait. Middle sinks and urinal units have been cordoned off and cannot be used in order to maintain 2m social distancing.

***What will the children be learning?***Our main focus will be on the children’s health and well-being, PE, English and Maths and on
helping them transition back to school and to the next stage of their education. We aim to do lots of learning outdoors. All children will be made aware of the changes to policies and routines on Day 1 of their return.

***What if my child becomes unwell?***If anyone has a cough/temperature/feels unwell at school, they will be sent home. They will be removed by a member of staff using PPE to the allocated isolation room where they will wait until the parent arrives to collect them. The parent will be asked to walk around to the playground to collect their child. They will need to self-isolate for 7 days, or until tested negative. Anyone in the child’s household will also need to self-isolate for 14 days.
If a child or member of staff shows symptoms and tests positive for Covid-19, then the whole
‘pod’ that the child/adult was in must be sent home and they must self-isolate for 14 days.
Staff and children **should not attend** if they have symptoms or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household.

***What if my child has a medical condition or if I, or a member of my family, is ‘shielding’?***Children or parents who are clinically extremely vulnerable (or ‘shielding’) or who live with
someone who is ‘shielding’ should NOT attend school.

***How can I contact the school?***From the first day the school is open a member of the admin team will be available to answer
the telephone and to continue to deal with emails.
**The reception desks will remain closed and no parents should attempt to enter the
school buildings** – please telephone or email with any questions or concerns.

***My child has been attending because I am a key worker. Can he/she still attend?***Yes. These children will continue with their current arrangements. It is important to note that our school will be following the 2m social distancing and therefore the maximum capacity in our classrooms are 8-10. This is different to the government guidance which states a maximum
capacity of 15 children per classroom. Therefore, we have a limited number of places available
and we will be using the same approach for these places as we have before i.e. it must be last
resort for child care. Any parent requesting a new place must provide a letter from their employer stating they are a key worker.

***Will you be offering wraparound care through the Before and After School club?***Wrap around care will only be available for the children of key workers or those children deemed vulnerable. This will be chargeable from 15th June 2020.

***Is it compulsory for my child to attend?***It is not compulsory for your child to attend and there will be no sanctions for non-attendance.
We will endeavour to follow all the guidelines and to take all the precautions we can to keep your child safe should you decide to send your child to school; however, we understand that you will want to make your own decision about what is best for your child under these circumstances and we will support and respect whatever you decide. We appreciate some parents are as yet undecided about sending their pupils back, which we also fully understand. However please note, once our capacity is full, we may not be able to offer your child a place at a later date.

**What about behaviour and other policies?**

All children will be made aware of the changes to the rules and expectations of behaviour. We have to treat the safety of every person in the school building as the highest priority and therefore if a child is not willing or able to follow the rules, then their place at school will need to be reviewed.

All policies which require adjustments during this time will have a Covid addendum attached to the back of them. These will be placed, once approved by governors, into the designated returning to school area on the website.

**You can contact the school office by email if you wish to discuss any further concerns
and a member of the team will call you.**Many thanks again for your continued support throughout this difficult time.