

Thursday 21st May 2020

Dear Parents,

Following on from my letter dated 14th May, I am writing to update you on some of the plans made so far in readiness for the possible re-opening of the school. First and foremost, our highest priority is to maintain the safety and wellbeing of the children, families and staff; and all aspects of our offer and risk-assessment is informed by this.

This information will hopefully reassure you of the safety measures the school will be taking in order for the children to return safely. You can use this information to help you decide whether or not to return your child(ren) to school. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

A risk assessment has been provided by the Local Authority which also includes the advice issued by the Government. The risk assessment has been completed in the context of Uley School and has been approved by the Governing Body. Again, please bear in mind that risk can change and therefore any subsequent plans may need adapting based on the current guidance and school circumstances.

This link will take you to the guide for parents and carers, for the re-opening of schools on 1st June:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

How will risks to children, teachers and families be managed?

The Government have provided guidance and support to schools, colleges and childcare settings on [implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#) to help them to reduce the risk of transmission as more children and young people return. To prevent the spread of coronavirus, schools and other settings will use a range of protective measures to create safer environments in which the risk of spreading the virus is substantially reduced. Whilst such changes are likely to look different in each setting, as they will depend upon individual circumstances, they are all designed to minimise risks to children, staff and their families.

CORONAVIRUS

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

What will happen should a child show symptoms when at school?

Should a child show symptoms at school these will be our procedures. These procedures are taken from Government guidance and considered in the context of Uley School:

- The child will be moved to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door – this will be the cubby. They will have an adult with them.
- The window will be open for ventilation.
- If a room is not available – move to an area which is 2m away from others – this could be outside.
- If the child needs to use the toilet use a separate bathroom if possible – school accessible toilet and this will be cleaned afterwards following recommended cleaning procedures.
- PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if:
 - Personal care is needed and/or a distance of 2m cannot be maintained – e.g. a child with complex needs.
- Call 999 if they are seriously ill, injured or their life is at risk.
- If a member of staff has helped someone who is unwell, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.
- A child or adult who develops symptoms – should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days.
- Household members should isolate for 14 days frequent hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene practices.

Testing

Testing is available and can be booked via <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

You can ask for a test:

- For yourself, if you have coronavirus symptoms now (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste).
- For someone you live with, if they have coronavirus symptoms.
- You need to have the test in the first 5 days of having symptoms.
- It's best to ask for the test in the first 3 days, as it may take a day or two to arrange.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in my child's school?

- When a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days.
- Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days.
- All staff and children who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus.
- Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class/group within their education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.
- The other household members of that wider class/group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

Shielding - for children

- Clinically extremely vulnerable children who have a pre-existing medical condition, who have been told to shield, should not be attending school.
- Clinically vulnerable children who are considered to be a higher risk should follow medical advice.

CLEANING AND HYGIENE

There will be signs around the school reminding everyone of the coronavirus symptoms, to wash hands regularly, and to use tissues or sleeves for sneezing/coughing.

Washing Hands

This is the message for all adults and children:

- Wash your hands regularly more often for no less than 20 seconds with soap and water.
- 30 second timers will be available to help the children, as well as singing!
- Children and staff will be expected to wash their hands as soon as they arrive at school, throughout the day and before they leave.

Plus washing hands after:

- Touching your face,
- Blowing your nose,
- Sneezing,
- Coughing,
- Before eating and handling food,
- And of course after using the toilet!
- Hand sanitizer will be available but soap and water and washing for no less than 20 seconds will be part of the school routine.

Catch it, bin it, kill it – small lidded bins are placed around the school

The message for all adults and children is to:

- Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues or use the crook of your elbow – not in to your hand.
- Please use the lidded bins around the school for tissues, cloths, paper towels.
- Wash your hands.

The school works closely with the school cleaner, who will be in school at the end of each day to adhere to the cleaning guidelines. All frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned each day and throughout the day. On a Friday's the school staff will conduct a more thorough clean of the school resources and areas.

Cleaning frequently touched surfaces:

- Door handles,
- Handrails,
- Table tops,
- Play equipment,
- Toys,
- Electronic devices,
- Plus other touch points.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

The Government says:

Primary age children (particularly Y1 and YR) cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff all the time. It is still important to reduce contact between people as much as possible, so children, young people and staff where possible, should only mix in a small, consistent group and that small group should stay away from other people and groups. If you can keep older children within those small groups 2 metres away from each other, you should do so. While in general groups should be kept apart, brief, transitory contact, such as passing in a corridor, is low risk.

THE LOGISTICS!

We are trying to reduce possible contact between different groups of children and adults to minimise transmission of the virus. This will mean we will be minimising contact and mixing:

- Children will be divided into small groups – this will be less than the recommended 15, due to the size of the classroom and space recommended for social distancing.
- Adults will be allocated to each group.
- These groups will be allocated a room and this will be their room every day.
- Children of critical workers at this point will be divided between YR, Y1 and Y6 – this may mean children will be with different ages groups.
- The tables in each class will be moved so that the children can sit at a safe distance.
- Children will eat their lunches in their room or outside in an allocated space away from other groups.
- Each group will have an allocated space on the playground.
- The use of the field will be limited to a number of groups with space in-between or one group out at a time.
- Each group will be allocated a start of the day, and end of the day time.
- Each group will be allocated an entrance/exit door.
- Playtimes and lunchtime will be staggered.
- Children and adults will be encouraged to stay to one side of the corridor.
- All activities will take place in the children's allocated rooms or outside.
- Only one parent at drop off and collection time.
- There will be signs outside to guide parents to where/when to drop off/collect the children and signage reminding us all about keeping 2 metres apart.
- There will be a queuing system when dropping and collecting the children.

- There will be markings on the playground for guidance of where to stand.
- Once the parents have dropped the children off, they should leave the school premises straight away.
- Parents will not be able to enter the school.
- Parent and visitors will need to pre-arrange an appointment to enter to the school.
- Parents will need to say goodbye in the school playground. The older children may be able to walk in to the playground by themselves.
- If a child is upset we will do all we can to reassure and give the care, nurture and support we possibly can. We can phone you to keep you informed.
- If a child is so upset that they need extra support, we will ask you to step to one side to enable the other children to come in first.
- No teddies or comforters can be brought to school.
- We are currently considering the safety of keeping social distance when using the footpaths to/from school.
- We ask you to consider the safety of the residents around the school and to observe social distancing in and around the community at drop off and pick up times.

Creating Groups and Staffing

- We have planned for small groups of children and the staffing levels based on the assumption (unless parents have already said a definite no) that all children in YR, Y1 and Y6 will return. Therefore, what is planned may change should parents decide not to return their children. The children will be unable to move between groups.

Can children rejoin the school at some point?

Uley School are saying yes at this moment, but it is something that may change as updates are received.

CHANGES TO ROUTINE

- We are currently amending the behaviour policy to reflect the coronavirus protocols.
- We continue to promote our LIVE, LEARN and FLOURISH vision and positive reinforcement so our new rules will reflect observing hygiene and social distancing.
- The children will not be expected to bring anything in to school apart from their packed lunch (if they are not having a school packed lunch), drink and snacks. Please put these into a bag. The lunch box should be a box that can be washed out every day.
- Please do not bring anything extra in such as pencil cases, books from home etc. We will be providing individual resources in school for their use only.
- Caterlink will be providing packed lunches. Reception and Year 1 will receive their Universal Free-School meal. Year 6s can order a packed lunch in the usual way. Children can receive their Traditional Free-School Meal also either through a voucher or packed lunch if they attend school.
- The length of the school lunchtime has been reduced due to staggering lunches, the staff available and more time has been created outside throughout the day.
- We are asking all children to bring in a named water bottle.
- Please bring a couple of healthy snacks for each day.
- We will not be sending anything home as sharing of resources is discouraged.
- School uniform – the guidance says there is no need for anything other than normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in school therefore following this guidance we are **not** expecting children to wear school uniform but to wear sensible clothes that are then washed every day. No necklaces, bracelets or watches.
- There may be groups that have staff that do not usually teach them, but we are a small school and fortunately the children know the staff and vice versa.
- Some staff will be working from home to support the families that have children at home.

As you can see from the lists above, the school day will not be the school day that we are used to but we will do all we can to reassure the children, to keep them engaged and to keep them safe and happy.

LEARNING IN SCHOOL

This is an area where decisions need to be finalised. Education settings still have the flexibility to provide support and education to children and young people attending school in the way they see fit during this time.

Guidance suggests:

- The priorities for young children at this time are resocialisation into new style school routines; speaking and listening, and regaining momentum.
- The priorities of all children in the first instance are guiding them through this very different time, getting to know one another again and learning new routines and procedures.
- For the infants we have to be mindful about the sharing of equipment e.g. malleable resources, such as play dough, should not be shared and consideration should be given to their safe use.
- Reading and phonics has been a suggestion as a focus for the infants.
- For the Year 6s, it will be a time of re-integration and preparing for secondary school.

More information on this will follow shortly.

What if my child is eligible but has siblings who are not?

The Government says:

We are asking that only these year groups return to childcare providers, schools and colleges from 1 June. This does not include siblings in different year groups unless those siblings are in a priority group, for example, the children of critical workers. We hope that all primary school children can come back to school before the summer holidays, for a month if feasible, although this will be kept under review. Reducing the risks for children and staff is our utmost priority. Therefore any requests to take siblings will be refused.

Apologies for another rather long letter, but I hope this gives a bit more direction of what is expected should the planned phased return take place on the 1st June. I hope the bullet points help!

There will be more information regarding the school's offer, including a plan for the first week (staggering entry on days for groups), timetables, clarification of entrances/exits and more about the learning that will take place. I hope to get this information to you by the end of this week.

I acknowledge there are concerns and we share the same concerns too. When (if) schools re-open and we are able to put all the procedures in place, we can all work and grow in confidence together. If after reading this letter, you feel that sending your child back to school is not the right decision, or equally, if you feel that it is, then please let me know, otherwise I will assume you continue to be unsure and await the government updates.

Best wishes,

Zoe Mandeville