



OXFORD DIOCESAN
BOARD OF EDUCATION

NORTH LEIGH C E PRIMARY SCHOOL



HEADTEACHER

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Dear Parents and Carers

Following my letter yesterday regarding the planned extension to school provision from the beginning of June, I am now writing to set out in more detail the arrangements and preparations we are making in school to mitigate risks for children attending, families and staff.

Organisation

This is how we will organise the provision, commencing the week beginning Monday 1 June (assuming the Government confirms its plan for extension of opening on 28 May).

- School will be closed to all children (except those attending critical worker provision) for INSET days on Monday 1 June and Tuesday 2 June. Staff will use this time to continue to prepare classrooms for the 're-opening' of school and to ensure they are aware of updates to risk assessments and health and safety protocols;
- From Wednesday 3 June, we will continue to be open for children of critical workers, regardless of year group, for five days a week - including breakfast and after school club provision;
- Reception (Holly), Year 1 (Maple) and Year 6 (Ash) classes will be divided in half to create two bubbles of no more than 15 children. The two groups will not attend on the same days. The key worker group will be split if numbers exceed 15 pupils;
- On Thursday 4 June and Friday 5 June, the first 'bubbles' of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children will begin returning to school (on a part-time basis);
- On Monday 8 June and Tuesday 9 June, the second 'bubbles' of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children will begin returning to school (on a part-time basis);
- We will be open for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 for two consecutive days a week for face-to-face teaching (either Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday). They will continue learning at home for the remaining three days;
- School will only be open to our 'critical worker' bubble on Wednesdays to allow for comprehensive cleaning of rooms before use by the next group of pupils. This will also allow staff time to continue preparation of Home Learning resources for children not in school (see below).

School Routines and Safety Protocols

We have been working hard to formulate plans that include all reasonable adaptations to school life to reduce risk to our school community, while ensuring that children have as positive an experience as possible when they return. The changes that we will need to implement at North Leigh should not be underestimated, as the main challenge is that it is impossible to ensure complete social distancing in any primary school, especially amongst the younger pupils. This has been recognised in the Government guidance that we received: *"We know that, unlike older children and adults, early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In deciding to bring more children back to early years and schools, we are taking this into account."* Therefore, school will feel different to returning children and families and overarching measures include:

- Class sizes will be limited to a maximum of 15 (as per Government guidelines);
- Children in class 'bubbles' are not able to attend wraparound provision (breakfast and after school club);
- There will be staggered entry and exit times for different year groups.;
- Parents/carers will not be allowed to enter the playground or the school building;
- Seating and activities in classrooms will be organised to maximise social distancing;
- There will be some staggering of break and lunch times;
- Children will eat lunch in the classroom or in a designated outside area;
- There will be no mixing between bubbles and contact between staff working in other bubbles will be minimised;
- Regular hand washing and reinforcement of good hygiene with the children will be ongoing;
- Regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces or items (with a deeper clean between bubbles);
- Children to have their own 'stationery packs' to avoid sharing whenever possible;
- Other resources will be limited to those that can be easily cleaned;
- Outdoor learning opportunities will be maximised.

We have tried to give more details of these routines/protocols in the attached booklet. I appreciate that they will feel very 'formal' as written procedures, but I do ask you to remember that they will be delivered by our lovely, approachable North Leigh staff.

Home Learning

We will continue to post Home Learning on the website for ALL year groups (for returning classes, this will reflect the learning that will be happening in school) and class teachers will continue to provide feedback and support via class emails. We are also hoping to give more structured activities in order to support more writing at home.

Expectation to Attend School

The Government is encouraging children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to return to school and we are looking forward to welcoming those back who choose to return. We appreciate that some of you may be reluctant to send your children back to school and will have concerns about their safety. This is a decision that only you can make. The Government acknowledge this and have said that parents who choose not to send their children in during the summer term will face no repercussions. For now, so that we can organise bubbles effectively and ensure appropriate staffing is in place, **we**

are asking all parents/carers with children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to email the school office by Monday 25th May to confirm that either:

You are considering sending your child into school on 4th June.

OR

You do not intend to send your child back during the summer term.

If we do not hear from you by this date, we will assume that your child will not be attending.

If you choose for your child not to return to school, you will retain the option to take up that place later in the summer term. However, we will ask for notification during the week prior to allow planning for their return.

Children of Critical Workers

Many of you will be aware that we have been open since 23 March to children of critical workers. These children will continue to attend school, as now, with access to wraparound provision. Government guidance now requires that these children have to be organised into their own bubble and so it is not possible for them to join their class bubble for part of the week and then attend the critical worker provision on other days.

We anticipate that there may be an increased demand for critical worker provision. However, additional places will be limited by the fact that we can only accommodate two critical worker bubbles in school, so we may have to prioritise requests for additional places. **If you believe that your child qualifies for critical worker provision, and you have not already done so, please email the school office by Monday 25 May with details of your critical worker status and the days you require provision** (please only request days when you are actually in work). In prioritising requests, as when setting up the provision originally, we may have to consider only taking children where both parents are critical workers in front line services.

We will be in contact with you as soon as possible after 25 May to respond to your request.

Children with an EHCP or Classed as Vulnerable

These children, regardless of year group, are also entitled to provision within school. If your child qualifies in one of these groups and they are not already attending school, please contact the school office to discuss their options for attending.

Children in other Year Groups

The Government also announced, "*Our ambition is to bring all primary year groups back to school before the summer holiday, for a month if feasible, though this will be kept under review*". This will be an even greater challenge and, under the current guidelines, will only be feasible if all children are in school on a part-time basis. However, there are no concrete details about the proposal at this point. We will, of course, inform you as and when further information emerges.

For children in Year 2 to Year 5 we will continue to provide home learning and class teachers will continue to provide feedback and support via class emails.

Government Guidance prepared for parents/carers can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-forparents-and-carers>

Further Communication

We fully appreciate that, despite all the detail that you have here, there will be more questions that you may want to ask. We are, therefore, planning opportunities for parents of children who are likely return to attend a 'virtual forum' where you will be able to ask specific questions and seek clarification about arrangements in school. We will inform you of the arrangements for these following the Government's confirmation on 28 May that wider school reopening will go ahead.

In the meantime, please can I ask you to be aware that our focus in school will be on procuring resources and services necessary for reopening, training staff in new protocols, preparing classrooms for children's return and in maintaining support and feedback for home learning, so please bear with us if we are not able respond immediately to individual requests for information or details about reopening.

We should also say that, at this point, we do not have information about Government plans for the future or what school provision might look like in September that we haven't already shared with you, so will not be able to respond to your queries in this regard.

As always, we thank you all for your patience and understanding during these most difficult of times. We appreciate that there will be differing views on the Government's decision to reopen school at this point and also on the plan that we have formulated to make this request work for the children and families at North Leigh.

We can say that we are extremely proud of how our school community has pulled together throughout the past two months. Children, their families, and our staff have risen to this challenge - one that was unimaginable at the start of this year - in the most impressive way. We would like to record our thanks to all of you. Our collective response so far fills me with hope and confidence that we can overcome this next challenging phase in a similar fashion.

Yours faithfully

Deborah Seccull
Headteacher

Sophie Warner
Chair of Governors