



27th May, 2020

Reopening of the school

Dear parents of Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and Key Worker children,

I hope that you and your families are safe and well.

I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our plans for reopening on the assumption that the review of scientific information on 28th May will allow the Government to confirm a phased opening of schools for certain year groups from the 1st June. Clearly the dates outlined are dependent on Government confirmation but all of the underlying arrangements would remain in place even if the date of phased opening was pushed back.

Since the Government announced that schools would be expected to extend their offer to additional children, we have been working hard to:

- 1) Review guidance to schools and understand how this could be implemented as safely as possible.
- 2) Conduct risk mitigation exercises to ensure we minimise the risk to staff, children, and families.
- 3) Decide how we will work as a school and be confident our plans can be followed easily by everyone on site.
- 4) Purchase signs, personal protection and hygiene equipment for use where needed as per the guidance.
- 5) Reorganise our classrooms, staffing, catering, cleaning, and management of the site.

Please note that although I have set out some details of returning to school in this letter the accompanying booklet contains EVERY detail that you need for your child returning to Gretton Primary School so I urge you to read it carefully.

Reopening of the school has been a challenging and time-consuming exercise. I really appreciate your patience and continued support as we have worked through it.

During the risk mitigation process, it was clear the Government suggestion of 15 children in a classroom makes it impossible to have effective social distancing. The classrooms at Gretton School vary in size but on average the number of children we could safely accommodate would be about 10 in each room.

Allaying staff anxiety by having a strong plan and operating the lowest risk environment possible has been at the heart of our approach to re-opening: that is why, for now, we have opted for a more cautious approach than the Government guidance suggests. This means that we need to use many more classrooms than usual for the number of children who will be on site and we will also need to use the school hall as a classroom.

We understand that not every parent will want their children to attend from the start, but we need to prepare ourselves for much larger numbers than at any point since lockdown began. We have therefore planned to open cautiously and carefully with an approach that means we can accommodate growing numbers of children if more parents decide to send their children as time goes on.

Phased Return Schedule

- Our Reception children, Rowan class, will start on Tuesday 2nd June - full time. Taught in Rowan classroom initially but if numbers grow they will be split into Oak classroom. Mrs Knibbs will lead these groups.
- Our Year 1 children, Oak class, will start on Wednesday 3rd June – full time. Taught in Willow classroom initially but if numbers grow they will be split into Ash classroom. Mrs Hill and Mrs Redding will lead these groups.

- However, our Year 6 children, Sycamore class, will be split into two groups and come into school on alternate weeks as outlined in the table below. They will be taught in Maple classroom. This decision has been taken in light of the Government's recommendations of prioritising Reception and Year 1 and the fact that Gretton School does not have the space to accommodate EYFS, Yr1, Yr 6 and Key Worker children in small groups whilst adhering to social distancing measures. Mrs Block will be planning the teaching sequence for Year 6 but due to medical reasons will not be able to be in close contact with the children. Instead, the teaching will be led by Mrs Young and Mrs Lloyd. Year 6 will have a blended learning approach where their week in school will be followed by a week of home learning to consolidate and extend the work done in school. Please see the table below. You will be informed which group your child is in on Monday 1st June when Mrs Block rings you to confirm starting arrangements.

Return for Year 6

Week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	Training Day	Reception children start school	Y1 children start school	Y6 Group A	Year 6 Group B
2	A				
3	B				
4	A				
5	B				
6	A				
7	B				A + B

May do more days of A + B if social distancing measures allow

Children of Key Workers

- If your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6, they will be expected to join a protective bubble with other children of their age. This is to ensure they are accessing their educational entitlement.
- Key worker children in years 2, 3, 4 and 5 (many of whom may have been attending school since lockdown) will work in a protective bubble and will be able to come to school every day from 1st June if parents are working. They will be taught in the hall and Miss Hearne and Miss Clarke will be leading this group.

The school experience

We are determined to get things right from the outset and increase our provision as we go. However, it is important that you understand that their school experience will be different from life before lockdown. Here are some of the things that may be different:

- Your child may not be taught by their usual class teacher and could be working with staff less familiar to them.
- Children will not be able to mix with others outside their class 'Protective Bubble' in the playground or at lunchtime.
- Different arrangements for drop offs and collections will be in place to ensure social distancing and there will be staggered opening/departure times.
- We will not be able to provide our usual curriculum offer because equipment cannot be shared.
- Children will not be able to move freely around the classroom and the school.
- Occasionally your child may see staff in PPE, especially if dealing with a first aid issue or a poorly child.
- There should be no physical contact between staff and children. Clearly young children will need help understanding this as they often seek physical contact as a means of reassurance.
- Staff will not be allowed to hug children, even if they are in distress.
- Parents will only be able to contact school staff via email or telephone.

On their first day in school teachers will explain all the new procedures to their children in child friendly language.

Booking Information Deadlines (also see page 5 of the booklet)

To help us prepare we need an accurate picture from parents as to whether they intend to return their child to school. This information is essential to ensure we have everything in place for the numbers of children likely to arrive. You have already given us some initial information which has been very helpful.

Confirming your child's place

If you have said **YES** to sending your child back to school, we **WILL** expect them in school next week (on their group return day) unless we hear otherwise. If you would like to change your decision you must contact us by 4pm on Thursday 28th May via office@grettonprimary.org.

If you have said **NO** to sending your child back to school, you **WILL NOT** be able to send your child into school, unless you contact us by 4pm on Thursday 28th May via office@grettonprimary.org.

If you have said **MAYBE**, you will receive a phone call on Thursday 28th May requesting your final decision.

If you have said **YES**, you will be contacted by phone on Monday 1st June to confirm that your child has a place. This call will also confirm the initial arrangements for arrival at school and your child's start date.

If you change your decision at any point, you MUST contact the school. Please note we will need time to prepare for additional children.

When we know how many children will definitely be returning, we will:

- Organise children into classroom groups or 'Protective Bubbles' with their link staff
- Confirm the precise arrangements to you for child's first day by telephone on Monday 1st June.

School Dinners – (see page 5 of the booklet)

Your child can have a picnic lunch provided by school or bring their own packed lunch. For further details please see page 5 of the booklet.

Drop off and Collection arrangements – please read carefully the booklet (page 7) which explains clearly the staggered start times for each year group.

All children and parents should enter through the large double gates to the staff car park, so that parents can queue along the driveway and exit via a one-way system and out of the front gate. These will be the **ONLY** entrance and exit points. Only one parent may accompany a child. Teachers will meet the children in the staff car park. *It is essential that parents arrive on time at the start and end of the day.*

Making your decision

I encourage parents and carers to think very carefully about what is right for their own child. If you send your child back to school, we will do everything we can to provide the best possible experience. If you decide you want to keep your child at home, please be assured that we respect your decision. It will not impact on your child having a place at our school in the future nor will you be pressured about non-attendance or fined. We will also be maintaining our Home Learning Offer to all those children who are not in school.

I understand that this may be a very difficult decision for you to make but I am sure that whatever you decide it will be the right one for you and your family. You know your child best and I will totally respect and support whatever decision you take.

In order to help you make this important decision for your family, we have provided a detailed booklet about re-opening which contains the key information you need to know. If you have any questions about the information provided, please email the school – office@grettonprimary.org and we will respond to you as soon as possible.

Kind regards,



Jane MacDonald, Principal

This information has been fully ratified by Tim Eaton, Chair of Governors