



Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Following the Government announcement setting out an intention to reopen schools to some pupils from 1st June 2020, I sent a questionnaire out to eligible families to establish numbers.

Since then, we have received lots of enquiries for more information. This is completely justified as the final decision about whether to return your child to school is an important one. It is vital that parents and carers understand how we intend to operate in the event of it being deemed safe enough for more pupils to return. I must stress that we will only open to more pupils if our own risk assessments and risk management plans indicate it is safe to do so, in addition to any National or Local Authority directives.

I am sending this letter to all parents/carers, even though it **only applies to the children of key workers, vulnerable children and Year 6 at this stage**. I imagine that lots of our parents/carers will have similar thoughts and concerns.

In order to support parents/carers in making their decisions, I have addressed some of the questions raised by you:

### **Is the school definitely opening on 1<sup>st</sup> June?**

As a school we have made the decision to reopen to Year 6 pupils on Monday 8th June. This is because before opening to more pupils the school staff need to reorganise, plan and clean the school site thoroughly, we are therefore taking the week beginning Monday 1st June as a preparation week. Please note from **Monday 8th June, school will be open to Year 6 pupils from Monday to Thursday each week, this will allow the school to have a deep clean on Friday, before the pupils return the following Monday. The school will remain open all week to the children of key worker and vulnerable pupils all week.**

### **Which children can return to school when it reopens?**

We will continue to remain open for children of keyworkers, and vulnerable children as we have done throughout 'lockdown'. If you think you are eligible and would like your child to attend this provision, and they have not done so already – please contact the office. In addition, we have been asked by the Government to welcome year 6 pupils back into school.

Please can we ask Year 6 parents/carers to contact the school office to confirm their child's attendance so we can firmly establish pupil numbers, so that specific plans can be devised.

### **Will my child be with their friends?**

Children will be allocated into small groups (15 or fewer) that we refer to as 'bubbles'. Each of these bubbles will be supervised by a teacher. These bubbles will remain the same – they will learn, play and eat together, so that the risks of cross-contamination are minimised. (You may have heard these bubbles also referred to as 'pods' by the Government.) Although we will consider friendships when creating bubbles, this will not be guaranteed and there will be no option to 'change pods' once we are up and running. It is more than likely pupils will be placed in a bubble according to their base class.

### **Will my child have their normal teacher?**

Due to a range of staffing considerations, this cannot be guaranteed. Each bubble will have 1 teacher, to teach and support the pupils in it. There will also be an additional member of staff who will act as a float, should there be an emergency. You can still make contact with your child's class

teacher via class dojo if you have any concerns and they remain the first point of contact for you in school. The school will continue to provide online learning resources for all pupils who remain at home.

### **What will the timing of the school day be?**

To reduce the number of children moving around school at the same time, we have created a staggered day. Bubbles will be organised according to their base class – each with their own break and lunch will also be taken at different times. School will start at 9am but to reduce the number of pupils entering the school at the same time, the school gate will be open from 8:45am and pupils will be guided straight up their bubbles by either myself or Mr Cotton.

At the end of the day each pod will have a staggered leaving time of around 5 minutes to avoid unnecessary congestion. Can we please ask that only 1 parent accompany their child at both drop off and collection times. If your child has permission to travel home alone, **PLEASE ensure you inform the school office ASAP**. To further avoid congestion, there will be a designated entry / exit door and clearly marked one way system within the building.

### **How will drop off and pick up work?**

Staggered departure times as above, will help. We are also asking that parents / carers do not enter the school site unless asked to do so. Please 'deliver' your child to a member of staff at the school gate, and then move away. We will install signs to remind you to observe social distancing. We respectfully ask parents not to meet or chat with other parents on the pavement. If you have any messages for staff, please do this via the school office or class dojo.

### **What will learning be like?**

Children learning at school with their adults will receive the same 'home learning' that all of the children receive, along with some additional resources, subjects and daily outdoor learning. This is to try and ensure that we maintain some parity in the children's learning opportunity. There will also be activities centred on children's emotional wellbeing and transition to high school.

### **What about food and drink?**

Children will not be using the dinner hall and no lunch will be provided. All children will need to bring a packed lunch with them, which they will eat within their bubbles in the classroom during lunch time. Children in receipt of free school meals who are currently receiving vouchers are requested to also bring in a packed lunch for the first week and once we have an overall figure of pupils, we will be able to provide our FSM pupils with a packed lunch. All children must bring a full water bottle to school each day – this must be washed thoroughly each day. The children will keep their lunch with them at their allocated desk.

### **What about uniform?**

All pupils attending school will be required to wear school uniform.

### **What about equipment and phones?**

Your child should leave all their own equipment at home and we will provide everything they need. This equipment will be in a named case that will be kept in school and will not be shared with other children. Children are not therefore required to bring any bags or rucksacks, which may then be difficult to clean.

We request that children do not bring phones into school, as we will not be locking them in safes in the usual way. Any important messages will be conveyed through the school office/class dojo. Any phones brought into school must be switched off and are carried at the owner's own risk.

### **Are children expected to attend every day?**

Children in Year 6 are expected to return to full time schooling. In the case of normal sickness absence, you should contact the school by telephone if your child is unwell. Children of key workers can attend flexibly. Please continue to inform the school office of your child's attendance.

### **What if someone gets ill with coronavirus symptoms?**

If a child develops symptoms at home, you must keep them at home and let us know straight away. If your child becomes ill at school, they will be isolated from other children and sent home. Other children and adults in that bubble will also need to isolate with family members, in line with Government guidelines. Families should then access testing (which is now available to anyone with symptoms).

Further guidance is set out on the government document 'Coronavirus: implementing protective measures in education settings':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

The link to guidance for parents/carers is:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

### **Will staff or children be wearing PPE or face coverings?**

Children will not be wearing face coverings at school, as we will not be able to ensure that these are handled hygienically. Staff will only wear PPE in line with Government guidance. This stipulates PPE is not needed unless in close contact with a person with symptoms, or when undertaking intimate care. Therefore, PPE will only be worn by our trained First Aiders when they are dealing with medical issues.

### **How will you ensure social distancing?**

Although we have followed guidance and will schedule the school day to minimise the number of children in any one area at any one time, we cannot guarantee that 2m social distancing can be fully observed. If we feel that pupils cannot settle into school without getting too close to others and compromise social distancing to the extent that it becomes a risk, then we will talk to you directly about this. We feel that parents/carers play a big part in preparing their children for what will be an appropriate way to interact at school. We will apply our school expectations of conduct at all times and are developing these in the light of social distancing issues. We will contact parents / carers of any child who deliberately breaches our rules and apply sanctions. In the most severe situations, the school reserves the right to issue exclusions for poor conduct.

### **Can I change my mind at a later date after I see how everything works in reality?**

The simple answer is yes, but we would rather plan for the largest possible number of pupils to avoid having to rearrange bubbles in the future. I would strongly suggest that parents/carers opt in, if they are unsure at this stage. Those who are absolutely sure that they do not want their child to attend before September, should opt out to help our planning process. Thank you for completing the surveys last week.

### **Please inform the school office immediately if your child will:**

- a) intend to return as soon as school reopens (from 8th June)
- b) will consider returning before the end of term, but not yet or
- c) they will NOT return before September.

I hope that the above information is helpful to you.

Thank you for the support you have shown to us through these difficult times. Please bear with us as we continue to endeavour to support you and your children into this next phase of education.

Yours sincerely

*N. Patel*

**Mrs N Patel**

Acting Headteacher



Article 3: The best interest of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Osborne Road, Acton, London W3 8SJ | Tel: 020 8993 9053 Fax: 020 8896 0472 | Email: [admin@berrymede-jun.ealing.sch.uk](mailto:admin@berrymede-jun.ealing.sch.uk) | [www.berrymede.com](http://www.berrymede.com)

