



22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

## Update to parents COVID-19

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you are all safe and well. It's hard to believe we are approaching half term. As a team of staff and governors, with children of all ages between us, we understand the difficulties you have been facing trying to manage home learning and your own workload, as well as finding some time to enjoy the good weather and some daily exercise. I am so proud of your wonderful children who have shown great resilience, one of our values that we discuss in school so often. Next week, the teachers will not be setting optional home learning activities but also please enjoy some time off and hopefully some good weather.

I would also like to thank again all parents and carers who took the time to fill in the survey last week for students potentially returning to school. This has enabled us to start the planning process and what school might look like upon reopening. The government have indicated that their final decision about whether schools should begin a wider opening will be delivered on the 29<sup>th</sup> May. Following meetings with staff and school governors, we are planning that, subject to this decision giving the go ahead, we will begin to open for pupils from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June. This may not be all pupils at the same time and may be subject to change so more details will follow.

We are also aware that some family circumstances may have changed during this unprecedented time and we would like to help. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, your child may now be eligible for Free School Meals. Please follow this link to check your eligibility and apply; <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals> or see information on Northumberland County Council website <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Meals.aspx>

After the Half Term break, home learning will continue to be set via School 360, Tapestry and google classroom for all year groups. Staff will continue to be able to support with some of the learning queries as much as possible, however, these may not be as timely as the current situation as all staff will be in school teaching those pupils attending.

The school has been following the Department for Education (DfE) guidance published 14<sup>th</sup> May [Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1 June](#) to formulate our risk assessment and plans. We have applied this guidance to the specific context of our school and started to add further detail to our plan to ensure that all students and staff's safety is at the forefront of our thinking. Whilst we have started to plan in great detail to ensure this, we have just received further health and safety guidance mid-week regarding high levels of safety for specific contexts in schools and this must be reflected in our plans.

**General guidance:**

- Children will be in a group of no more than 15. However, following the guidance, the majority of our classrooms will not accommodate 15 pupils so group sizes are likely to be smaller.
- Children will be with one main adult in a group and this may not necessarily be their own class teacher.
- We will be limiting the amount of resources brought from home so children will be asked to bring only a jacket and cap, clearly named water bottle and packed lunch where required. No book bags or pencil cases will be necessary.
- Children should come to school wearing sun cream as they will be outside as much as possible. They should wear clean clothes each day, consisting of their school polo shirt and jumpers and plain joggers. They should also wear their trainers.

**Drop off and pick up:**

- We will be allocating specific times for each group to be dropped off and collected. These times must be strictly followed to minimise the number of people on the school site and ensure we can maintain social distancing around the gates.
- These drop off and collection times will be different for each group although we will endeavour to keep siblings in the same slot.
- Only one adult should drop off and collect the children.
- Parents will not be able to enter the school building and must leave the school site after dropping their child.
- There will be a one way system for drop off and collection – it will be important to follow the signs that will be displayed.

**Break times and lunch times:**

- Children who usually have a free school lunch will be provided with a packed lunch. The school will not be making hot meals but packed lunches can be bought at the usual price of a school meal.
- The children will eat their lunch in the classrooms or outdoors, if possible, hopefully taking advantage of some good weather.
- The yard and outside areas will be zoned so that each group has an allocated area every day for break times.

**In the classroom:**

- The children will remain with their allotted group and staff members throughout the day. They will use the same room and, where appropriate the same desk. The groups will not mix.
- Children will not be able to swap groups
- Children will be encouraged to wash their hands on a regular basis throughout the school day and staff will supervise and encourage children to take time and care with this.
- All unnecessary furniture, equipment and soft furnishings have been removed from classrooms to make the environment easier to clean. We will, however, endeavour to ensure our classrooms still look friendly and inviting, particularly for our youngest pupils.
- The teachers are required to maintain social distance where possible.

The school will encourage social distancing but we acknowledge that with young children this is extremely difficult and we cannot guarantee this, which is why our group sizes will be kept as small as possible.

**Cleaning:**

- Touch points and tables in the classrooms will be wiped throughout the day by staff.
- Lidded bins have been provided for wipes and tissues.
- Each classroom will be cleaned by our cleaners at the end of each day.

**Children of key workers:**

Children of key workers in Nursery, Reception and Year One will join these class groups. Other key worker's children will be grouped and these groups will not mix.

All these precautions are necessary to stop or limit the spread of the virus and ensure the safety of everyone in the school. More details will be sent out next week to those families indicating they required a school place, regarding the times specific groups of children will need to arrive and be picked up from school as well as more details about what the school day may look like.

Again, I must stress that these plans are subject to change depending on the additional guidance we receive from the relevant agencies and whether the 5 targets set by the government are met on the 29<sup>th</sup> May.

I will, of course, continue to keep you all updated on any developments and the governing board and myself will be continually reviewing the situation and provision in school and thank you for your continued support, cooperation and understanding, this has been greatly appreciated.

Please take care and if you need to contact me, please use the admin e-mail: [admin@tritlington.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@tritlington.northumberland.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely

Mrs Palmer