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# Hassocks Infant School

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Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020

## Re-opening arrangements for our school after 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Every letter that I have written since the Covid-19 pandemic has felt like the most difficult letter I have written. This letter is no exception. Many of you will be pleased to hear that following a thorough risk assessment and approval from the governing body, we are now able to begin the phased opening of our school. However, the guidelines from the DfE have placed a significant demand on our school in terms of staffing and the physical space available to us and many families will be disappointed to find out that for many, home learning will continue for the foreseeable future.

The DfE guidance for Infant Schools is very clear and we are required to prioritise groups of children in the following order:

- Provision for key workers / vulnerable children
- Reception
- Year 1
- Year 2

From the 1<sup>st</sup> June, we will be expanding our provision for our key worker families and vulnerable groups. As many families are now returning to work, this group has grown significantly and from 1<sup>st</sup> June, we will be able to offer provision for a maximum of 38 children. We do ask families to only take a space if this is urgently needed to ensure that we can prioritise those who need this space the most. We are unable to accept more than 38 children in this group. From 15<sup>th</sup> June onwards, Reception children will be able to attend school on a part-time basis, subject to this decision being made by the government on 28<sup>th</sup> May and unions. For safety reasons, we have staggered the return of children and therefore the timetable will look like this:

Week Beginning	Who is in school?	Further information
28 <sup>th</sup> May	The government will announce their decision about the phased reopening of schools. It is possible that new guidance will be issued at this point and plans may need to be reviewed.	



1 <sup>st</sup> June	Key workers and vulnerable children only.	This group will move to the Year 2 Classrooms and will enter the school through the entrance on Keymer Road. As our Reception classrooms have been in continuous use since February, they will be closed for a deep clean, staff training and reorganisation.
8 <sup>th</sup> June		
15 <sup>th</sup> June	Part time provision for Reception children to start.	Reception children will be invited to attend school, on a part-time basis, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. School will close on a Wednesday for Reception children so that the school can be cleaned and for staff PPA.

Children will be organised into “bubbles”, with a maximum of 15 children per bubble. Half a bubble will attend for either a morning or afternoon session. A maximum of 8 children will attend each session. Each of these bubbles will operate in isolation, with key members of staff allocated to each bubble. Unfortunately, due to group sizes, children may not be in a group with their class teacher, TA or in their own classroom. Class teachers have organised bubbles and have taken into account children’s friendship groups as well as balancing individual needs between the groups. We will contact families separately to confirm details for each bubble and staffing once parents have accepted a space. Due to the complexity of this task, we are not able to accept individual requests from families and children will not be able to move from one bubble to another.

### Arrangements for Children Not Attending School

If you are not able to attend school, please be assured that you have not been forgotten. We are disappointed that we do not have enough physical space or staff under the current guidance for our children in Year 1 and 2. For these families, home learning will continue to be provided by the school. As many of our staff will be working in school full-time and organising planning, teaching groups of children, cleaning and providing support for families, we will be making the following changes to our home learning from the week beginning 15<sup>th</sup> June:

- Home learning will be sent home weekly on a revised single page format. Additional online resources will be provided for those who wish to further extend home learning.
- Class email accounts will remain active. However, please be aware that class teachers and TAs may not be able to respond instantly.
- We will be trialling whole class Zoom sessions to keep in touch with children. These will replace the fortnightly phone calls.
- A team of staff working off-site will be available to make contact with individual families and offer support and guidance, if needed.

We are mindful of transition for our Year 2 children and remain in regular contact with Windmills Junior School. Our next phase of planning will focus on transition and preparing for September. As yet, we have no information about the expectations for schools in September. We will be in touch shortly to discuss transition arrangements. We are exploring



many solutions however, at this stage and under current guidance, our options remain very limited.

### Information for Children Attending School:

Group	Class Base	Entrance	Drop Time	Off	Collection	
Willow 1 (AM)	Apple	Main gate on Keymer Road. Follow one way system through school premises to exit through Reception gate onto Chancellor's Park.	9.10		11.10	
Willow 2 (AM)	Willow		9.00		11.00	
Willow 3 (PM)	Apple		1.10		3.10	
Willow 4 (PM)	Willow		12.50		2.50	
Beech 1 (AM)	Beech		8.50		10.50	
Beech 2 (AM)	Ash		9.00		11.00	
Beech 3(PM)	Beech		12.50		2.50	
Beech 4 (PM)	Ash		1.00		3.00	
Cherry 1 (AM)	Cherry		8.50		10.50	
Cherry 2 (AM)	Chestnut		9.10		11.10	
Cherry 3 (PM)	Cherry		1.00		3.00	
Cherry 4 (PM)	Chestnut		1.10		3.10	
Manta ray 1 (keyworkers)	Elm		Blue gate on Keymer Road. Follow one way system through playground to exit through gate.	8.50		2.50
Manta ray 2 (keyworkers)	Oak			9.00		3.00
Manta ray 3 (keyworkers)	Holly		9.10		3.10	

### Before School:

- Please check your child's temperature before school and check that it does not exceed 38 degrees.
- Do not send your child into school if they, or a family member are displaying symptoms of Covid-19.
- If your child is going to be absent, please contact the school office by email or telephone before 9.05am.
- If phone lines are busy, please contact the school office at [office@hassocksis.com](mailto:office@hassocksis.com).
- We will contact children who are due to be in school if we have not received a message to explain the absence.

### Coming to School

- We have a one-way system for drop off and collection of children. Reception children will enter through the main gate on Keymer Road. Key worker families will enter through the blue gate on Keymer Road.
- Drop off and collection times will be staggered for each group. It is important that you arrive on time to avoid queuing outside the school gates. Markers will be placed onto the pavement to assist social distancing.
- Families will drop off the children at the drop off points for each group. These will be clearly signposted.



- Parents should exit the school by following the one-way system through the school premises and leave through the Reception gate onto Chancellor's Park. Senior leaders and office staff will be outside to assist you.
- Only one adult should accompany their child to / from school. Please try to avoid bringing younger siblings wherever possible. We recognise that this is unavoidable for some families without childcare.
- Adults and children should follow social distancing at drop off / collection. Children should remain with adults and hold your hand until they enter a classroom.
- Families are encouraged to walk to / from school and avoid using public transport. Unfortunately bikes and scooters cannot be left on the school premises. Please try to avoid using public transport. If you do use public transport, you may wish to wear a face covering, in line with government recommendations and check timetables before you travel.
- Key worker families will be able to access full-time provision, if needed. We will continue to offer an opt-in system for these families only.
- Reception groups who are attending school should attend every session, we are not able to offer the ability to pick and choose sessions.
- Unfortunately, we are unable to offer a breakfast club at the present time.

### Collection Arrangements

- Collection times are staggered to avoid lengthy queues outside the school.
- Families will be asked to enter through their designated gate on Keymer Road and to follow the one-way system around the school to the designated collection point.
- The teacher / TA responsible for the bubble will handover your child to you. We do ask families to minimise communication at drop off / collection to ease the flow of parents around the school site.

### Uniform

We would like children to wear school uniform to enable them to feel like they are coming back to school. However, we are aware that some children may have outgrown their uniform. We also recognise the challenges of washing uniform daily, particularly if you only have one jumper that still fits. There is no need to purchase a new uniform for your child and we ask that families dress their child in clothes closely matched to our uniform.

We will be using the outdoor area extensively. In addition to their uniform, your child will need:

- Sunscreen applied before attending school
- A sun hat
- A named water bottle
- A waterproof coat and wellies if wet weather is forecast
- A change of shoes for PE, e.g. plimsolls or comfortable trainers

### School Lunches

At the present time, we do not have the capacity to offer a hot school meal for every child. If your child is eligible for Pupil Premium funding and receives Free School Meals (FSM), we will continue to organise a weekly £15 voucher from EdenRed. Children in the key worker group will receive a hot school meal during the day.



Please send a piece of fruit into school for your child's mid-morning snack.

### **Organisation of classroom environments**

The DfE guidance recognises the challenges of social distancing in an early years environment. All of our classrooms have been reorganised, with excess furniture and resources moved into storage to create additional space. Classrooms do look sparse and soft furnishings, including rugs, cushions and soft toys have been removed. Space between tables has been increased however, it is not possible to achieve a 2-metre distance within our classrooms.

Children will be given their own equipment wherever possible, for example pens and pencils. Children will have access to practical resources during their time at school. These will be carefully selected to ensure that they can be easily cleaned throughout the day and at the end of each session. Children will be able to interact with their peers within their bubbles. Our timetable and movement around the school is being carefully planned to ensure that contact between bubbles is minimised. We will follow social distancing between bubbles.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a well-equipped outdoor environment. Our school grounds have been divided into 6 separate areas and groups will spend the majority of their day outdoors. We plan to use the school grounds in all weathers. Sadly, fixed play equipment cannot be used and will be closed when we reopen. Each class will have access to a limited range of outdoor play equipment, for example plastic balls which will be washed after each session. We will shortly be posting further information onto our school website, including photos of classrooms and behaviour guidelines.

### **Our Curriculum**

Our top priority is to support children with the transition back into school and we will have a strong focus on Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED). We will also focus on Physical Education (PE), phonics, reading, writing and maths. Children in school will follow the same planning as children learning from home.

### **Staff Absence**

We are currently operating with a significantly reduced staffing structure. Every member of staff and available space is being used to accommodate Reception and key worker groups. Some staff will continue to work from home for personal reasons and will be supporting children and families with home learning. For this reason, it may be necessary to temporarily close bubbles due to staff absence. We have allocated a minimum of two adults to each bubble but our capacity and flexibility to provide cover for staff is incredibly limited. We will aim to give parents as much notification as possible if we do need to close a bubble.

### **Use of PPE**

The DfE does not recommend the use of face coverings or PPE in schools, with the exception of a number of specific circumstances. All staff have the option to wear PPE if they feel that this is appropriate and we do support any staff member who wishes to do this. Children are not advised to wear face coverings in school. All children and staff will regularly wash their hands with running water and soap throughout the day. We can guarantee that children in school will know the Happy Birthday song very well indeed!



Some staff, including first aiders and senior leaders may, on occasion need to move between bubbles in the school. These staff members will be provided with PPE and will use this if their role requires them to move between bubbles. Please warn your child not to be alarmed if they are greeted by a member of staff wearing PPE, behind the PPE will be a big smile ready to welcome your child back to school!

### Clinically Vulnerable Groups

If your child or a family member is in the extremely clinically vulnerable or a shielding group, we are unable to offer a space in school at this time. Due to the age of the children, we are unable to guarantee that children and staff will be able to strictly adhere to social distancing measures. Please consult the NHS website for further information about this category. We request any family who have a child or family member in the clinically vulnerable group to seek medical advice before sending their child to school.

### Children or staff showing symptoms of Covid-19

- Children and staff should not attend school if they have any symptoms of Covid-19.
- If symptoms develop during the school day, children or staff will be asked to leave their bubble.
- For children, parents will be asked to collect their child from school immediately. The child will be asked to wait in our isolation room and will be supervised by a member of staff who will be wearing PPE.
- Staff and children will be asked to take a Covid-19 test and to provide a copy of the test result before returning to school.
- The child or adult will be asked to self-isolate for 7 days or until a negative test result is received. Other members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days.
- The rest of the bubble will also be sent home and requested to self-isolate until test results have been received.
- If a positive test result is received for an individual, the school will seek and follow advice from Public Health England.

### Applying for a space

For vulnerable children and key workers who are already registered, there is no need to do anything. Your child will be allocated to a bubble and we will contact you to advise you of the new arrangements for attending school. If your child is in Reception, you can request that they are moved to a class bubble as opposed to the key worker group. Once a child has been allocated to a bubble, they cannot be moved.

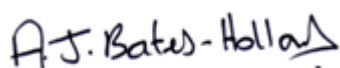
We fully respect parental preference and Reception parents now need to decide if they would like their child to attend school from the week beginning 15<sup>th</sup> June. I would like to reiterate that no parent will be penalised if they do not wish to send their child to school at this stage. Please use this link to complete an opt-in form and formal agreement: <https://bit.ly/2zvxeDe>  
The final deadline for applications is **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June**. If we do not receive a response, we will assume that you have decided to keep your child away from school. We will be unable to accept any further applications until we review our procedures in the week beginning 29<sup>th</sup> June.



We have had to change every detail of our school day; school is going to look very different for all of us. We are incredibly lucky at Hassocks Infant School to have a wonderful, caring staff team who are committed to supporting every child. My thanks go to the team for all of their support and hard work during these very challenging times. Our school has remained open continuously since February and all of the team have worked above and beyond expectations. This is a very strange time for everyone and going forward we will try our very best for you all.

Based on our risk assessments of children, staff and our school site, we will endeavour to maintain the standards that are required by the DfE. However please be aware that every school's context is different and no school can guarantee social distancing or safety from Covid-19 for children or staff, but rest assured we have minimised the risks as much as possible.

Take care and stay safe,



Adrian Bates-Holland  
Headteacher

