



COALWAY COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL

Tel: 01594 833457

Email: [admin@coalway-inf.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@coalway-inf.gloucs.sch.uk)

24<sup>th</sup> May 2020

## Re: Wider School Re-opening

Dear Parents and Carers,

On behalf of the Governing Board, we are writing to inform you of our decisions regarding the wider re-opening of the school. Thank you for your patience whilst awaiting this information.

Set out below is our offer of provision; it remains up to individual parents whether they decide to take up our offer. We have included as much information as possible to help you make your choice.

The Governors have taken account of all available Government, Department for Education (DfE), Local Authority (GCC) and Public Health information. Maximising the safety of all of our children, staff and families has been our prime focus throughout this process and a priority which has driven all decision making. In line with GCC and DfE guidance, assessments have been undertaken to minimise risks to the children, staff and families. The Governing Board have considered the views of staff and parents within their planning process, whilst discharging their authority to make decisions which they feel are in the best interests of all parties.

The offer below is the most balanced that we can make at the current time. However, parents should note that our decisions are subject to the Governing Board receiving any further Government, Public Health, Local Authority or professional bodies' advice or directives. Any information which alters or compromises our current risk assessment outcomes may result in alterations to our current plan. The safety of our children, staff and families is our absolute priority.

### The arrangements for wider re-opening are as follows:

- Wider re-opening of the school (i.e. opening to children within Reception and Year 1 classes) will be delayed until the **week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> June** at the earliest.
- School will continue to be open to the children of Critical Workers (Key Workers), Vulnerable Children and Children with EHCPs during the week beginning 1<sup>st</sup> June. These are the **only** children that may attend school during the week 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June. *Guidance regarding this group's attendance has changed (details below) and these places will need to be agreed with the Headteacher by Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May to ensure appropriate staffing levels are established in advance of attendance.*
- From 8<sup>th</sup> June, pupils will be allocated into consistent groups with consistent staff (up to 6 groups), which we are calling 'Bubbles'. Bubbles will remain together all day every day.
- Once Bubbles are established, there will be a maximum of **8 pupils** and 2 adults within each Bubble. Full time attendance will be required and Bubbles will run for a period of 3 weeks in the first instance, from 8<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June.
- School hours will be 9.00a.m.-3.00p.m. every day **except for one afternoon** (day to be confirmed) **when school will close at 12.00 noon** to facilitate weekly deep cleaning and teachers' preparation time.

- The viability of the school's arrangements will be evaluated throughout the initial 3 week Bubble period, 8<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> June. This will inform the possibility of wider re-opening for the groups of children not included in the first phase.
- The second phase of possible wider opening will be 29<sup>th</sup> June – 17<sup>th</sup> July, a further 3 week period. Organisation of these groups will be established according to Government, Department for Education, Local Authority and Public Health advice at this time.
- Any children, staff or family members who fall within the clinically vulnerable or extremely clinically vulnerable groups will **not** be offered either a school place or be expected to enter the school site. This includes children living in households where family members fall into these groups.

## Eligibility for a school place

In accordance with Government guidance for an Infant School, provision will be offered in the following priority order:

1. **Children of Critical Workers, Vulnerable children and Children with EHCPs.**
2. **Reception pupils** (excluding clinically or extremely clinically vulnerable children/families).
3. **Year 1 pupils** (excluding clinically or extremely clinically vulnerable children/families).

The definition of Critical Workers (Key Workers) and vulnerable children is available on the GOV.UK website within the document [here](#). *Parents should note that the Government have changed their advice regarding key worker and vulnerable children's attendance – they are now encouraged to attend school even if parents are able to keep their children at home. The previous directive that these children should only attend if there is no-one who can safely care for them at home will no longer be applicable – attendance may begin from 1<sup>st</sup> June.*

Critical workers will be required to provide **evidence** from their employer of their Key Worker role. This should be verified by the Headteacher by **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May** should parents wish to take up a school place from 1<sup>st</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> June.

Parents should not feel that they have to take up a school place if their child falls within an eligible group; **attendance is not compulsory**, it is parental choice. Government advice recognises the challenging circumstances that we find ourselves operating in and parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.

Children will **not** be eligible for a school place if any of the following reasons apply:

- Children present with any Coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or are self-isolating within a household. In these cases, children, parents and family members should stay at home to avoid spreading infection to others. They should neither attend school nor come on to the school site.
- Children fall within the clinically vulnerable or extremely clinically vulnerable groups, or are living in a household where family members fall into these groups. Our decision is based on consistent Government and Public Health advice and guidance regarding the increased vulnerability of these people and the increased risk of serious consequence or lifelong effects should they contract the virus.

- Children who will be attending another setting whilst also attending school, for example if they attend school 9.00a.m.-3.00p.m. and then attend an after school club/ childminder/ nursery before or afterwards. Doing so increases possible contamination and transmission and would bring increased risk into our Bubbles for the rest of the children and their families. Parents will need to give assurances that their child will not be attending any other setting if they are part of a Bubble.
- Children who cannot manage their self-care needs independently (toileting for example).

Furthermore, the Governors reserve the right to exclude eligible pupils from attending if they do not comply with behavioural expectations and consequently place staff or other pupils at risk, be this in terms of following hygiene requirements sufficiently or more general health and safety risks.

We also reserve the right to withdraw a school place should it become evident that parents have broken appropriate social distancing measures either on site or outside of school. This would bring increased risk to children, staff and their families, which would compromise our safety measures.

### What should you do now?

Contact the School Office via email or telephone to:

1. Identify if your child is eligible for a place *(If the reason is that you are a Key Worker, you will need to provide documentary evidence).*
2. Confirm you wish your child be considered for a place to attend during the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June and if so, on which days?
3. Confirm you wish your child be considered for a place to attend 8<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> June? *(This option is full time attendance only)*

All replies should be returned to the School Office by 9.00a.m.Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>May.

Tel: 01594 833457 Email: [admin@coalway-inf.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@coalway-inf.gloucs.sch.uk)

We will confirm the availability of places as soon as possible after 27<sup>th</sup> May and in advance of the proposed 1<sup>st</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> June start dates.

Parents will find additional information in the Appendix to this letter (Pages 4-6).

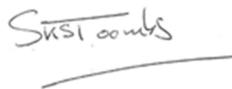
Please don't hesitate to contact the school should you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,



**Mrs. F. Hamilton**

Headteacher



**Mr. K. Toombs**

Chair of Governors

## **Appendix - Additional Information**

### **Bubbles:**

Where possible, the 2 supervising staff will be a Class Teacher and a Teaching Assistant. Our current staff shortages may necessitate that several groups will be supervised by 2 Teaching Assistants under the direction of a teacher.

Attendance will be required on a full-time basis, for the 3 week period. Keeping the same group of people together throughout will minimise transmission and therefore maximise everyone's safety. There will not be an option to take up part-time attendance or join the group after a week. The Bubble principle would be unworkable in a part-time arrangement and safety implications would increase with constant mixing of increased numbers of children. Furthermore, staffing issues would quickly occur.

Bubbles will stay together all day, including at break times and lunchtimes, and will not mix. Break times and lunchtimes will be staggered across the school to ensure separation.

### **Social distancing:**

The limited number of children in a Bubble improves our ability to implement social distancing in each classroom. Reducing the number of contacts and closeness of that contact is key to breaking transmission of the virus between households and to keep the spread of the virus under control.

Staff will seek to maintain social distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) between everybody in school wherever possible, as an essential element of our ability to offer a safe environment. Brightly coloured floor spots are currently in use to help the children visualise appropriate distancing, which the children have responded positively to over the last nine weeks. Social distancing is a difficult idea for our very young children to understand and follow, so modelling and using visuals like this is helping them.

Activities and movement times around school will be staggered to promote social distancing and reduce possible contact.

### **Classroom organisation:**

Classrooms will be reorganised to help social distancing, so will look different from normal. However, we are confident that we can maintain their welcoming feel. The children will not sit at a designated table all day – we feel that this is both unrealistic and unhealthy for our children. We will continue to use outdoor areas and play opportunities where we can.

The children will be provided with their own designated resources to use throughout the day, which will be stored in their own area of the room. These resources will only be used by that child, with regular cleaning taking place during and at the end of each day.

The children will not be able to use any soft toys or toys with intricate/small parts, due to cleaning requirements, but a choice of larger, washable equipment will be made available to them during the course of a week. Once again, all equipment will be thoroughly cleaned by staff each day.

Unfortunately, reading books present a significant problem for cleaning. Therefore, children should not bring in their book bags and books will not be available in classrooms. However, the children will be able to read on their individual iPad or via the classroom interactive whiteboards.

### **Use of outdoor space:**

It is widely accepted that an outdoor environment is the safest to reduce possible transmission and staff will aim to work outside as much as possible. Thankfully, the Summer term does tend to enable this more. Each Bubble will have outdoor time arranged so that Bubbles do not mix.

When inside the school building, all rooms will be ventilated as much as possible.

### **Items from home:**

Children must not bring in items from home to avoid any possible transmission. The only exceptions are packed lunches and water bottles.

Children may bring a packed lunch to school if they wish. It will be stored in their designated classroom space and will only be touched by them. We ask parents to ensure that packed lunch boxes are cleaned before coming to school each day and that children can easily open them and eat the contents without any need for staff assistance.

Parents should send their child to school with a water bottle which they can easily open should they need to refill it. The bottle must be cleaned thoroughly at home and refilled before coming to school.

### **Hygiene & Cleaning:**

Most importantly, strict hygiene and cleanliness practices will be in place to ensure everyone's safety and to minimise any possible spread of the virus, including:

- Regular, thorough hand washing for a minimum of 20 seconds
- Washing hands on entry to school, at least every hour, before lunch, after lunch and before going home.
- Catching coughs and sneezes in tissues, and washing hands afterwards.
- Ensuring that everyone keeps their hands away from their faces/mouths/eyes.
- Ensuring that staff supervise hand hygiene and social distancing measures at all times, reminding and correcting the children as appropriate, and providing a positive, consistent role model.
- Minimising the number of children in any one classroom, toilet or working space.
- Ensuring that children do not share any resources and cleaning those used regularly.
- Cleaning touch points/regularly touched objects and surfaces frequently. Additional, deeper cleaning and more frequent disinfecting of 'high touch' areas will take place by cleaning staff as well as school staff.
- Arranging seating on separate tables, including at lunchtime. Disinfecting tables before and after activities and eating.
- Ensuring plentiful supplies of soap, tissues, hand gel and paper towels.
- Prohibiting visitors to the site or school building, other than staff.
- Ensuring that all staff follow these measures consistently.

### **School dinner arrangements:**

Caterlink will provide all children attending school with a free mid-day meal. This has been a packed lunch (baguette) for the last nine weeks, which we anticipate will continue after the 1<sup>st</sup> June. Further details will be provided in due course.

### **PPE/Face masks:**

In accordance with Government guidelines we are not permitting masks to be worn, either by the children or in front of the children, except in emergency medical situations, i.e. staff having to attend to a child in close contact when bodily fluids are present.

### **Procedures for Parents:**

- Parents are required to follow all relevant Government directives should they or their child feel unwell, develop coronavirus symptoms or need to follow self-isolation guidelines. Parents or family members should not be on site if they present with any symptoms. Parents should keep the school informed of any illness/absence regarding their child or within their family, by telephoning the School Office.
- Parents must not enter the school building. Instead, we would ask that parents continue to telephone with messages or enquiries to ensure contact is minimised.
- In communication with staff at changeover times, parents should maintain a 2m distance.
- Site entrance gates will remain closed during the day and only opened at designated times. Entry times to the school site for drop off/collection will be staggered. Details regarding this will be finalised before 1<sup>st</sup> June, once numbers attending are established and Key Workers' needs are understood. Liaison with Coalway Early Years and the Junior School will also be required to ensure that site entrances and pedestrian pathways do not become congested and compromise safety.
- Parents should avoid arriving on the school site too early to ensure that contact with others is limited. Parents will be provided with allocated spaces to wait, spaced at 2m distance apart to ensure appropriate social distancing between yourself and others.
- Children should not play together whilst waiting for doors to open or after collection – parents should expect to be challenged if this is observed and a school place may be withdrawn as a consequence.
- If possible, the children should be dropped off or collected by only one adult. Where siblings need to attend, they should be closely supervised by parents and kept away from other children and adults who are waiting at designated points. Social distancing of 2m should be observed at all times.
- Parents should not stop and chat in groups or when crossing others on pedestrian paths unless this can be done at a 2m distance and following social distancing guidelines. Parents should expect to be challenged by school staff if inappropriate social distancing measures are observed and a school place may be withdrawn as a consequence.
- Parents will not be able to drive onto site unless in an emergency.
- Visitors will not be allowed onto site or into the school building unless for an emergency.