



Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you are all well and navigating this next phase without too much difficulty. I wanted to thank you for responding to my brief survey at the beginning of the week, it has helped us to judge current feeling and thoughts as we plan for the next stage.

I wish I was able to give you a clear indication of what the next phase will mean in detail, but Kent schools are still waiting for the local authority to issue their guidance. There is also guidance available to parents produced by the Government that you may find useful to refer to. Schools have found the advice ever-changing as we try to plan the best way forward. The DfE guidelines are comprehensive, but where there is ambiguity, they can be interpreted differently. The Kent authority has been working to provide clarity and certainty, but this is taking time. As a result, we do not have a definitive plan that I am able to share with you, and I am sure that things may change slightly over the next days and week too. You will have seen in the media that there is strong involvement with teaching unions too which adds to the uncertainty. As soon as I am able to give you a set plan with detailed information about the measures we will have in place to keep everyone safe, I will.

So what do we know? We know that for EYFS, year 1 and year 6 the expectation is that they will be in school full-time from the earliest date of June 1st. We know that whilst parents will be encouraged to send their children in, there will be no penalties for those that choose not to. We are also advised that schools should be prioritising EYFS and Year 1 when decisions around space and staff are made. As a school we will need to very carefully assess the space and staff we have available to ensure we can adequately follow the Government directive. If we cannot, we will need to be flexible and creative in our approach.

We know that the Government would like schools to group children into 'bubbles'. They would contain up to 15 children with 1 or 2 adults, depending on staffing levels. These 'bubbles' will be self-contained and not mix with the others. They will have a set room, staggered break and lunch times and restricted access to their normal resources. This will inevitably mean that children will be in groups that are not necessarily led by their own class teacher and with only half of their class. Our current Key worker children will continue to come and form their own 'bubble' as they have been doing. We are looking into extended hours too, but this will probably only be available for key worker children, carrying on the current arrangement. The guidance also makes it very clear, that should any member of a 'bubble' display symptoms, the entire 'bubble' must self-isolate for a period of 14 days.

Teaching will look very different as we try to ensure quality learning with a new set of rules. Social distancing within those groups will be enforced as much as possible, but if we are honest and as the government has said, social distancing in schools will not be entirely possible. We will no doubt have to ask children to bring with them their own pencil cases and resources to reduce any sharing and therefore contamination. We will probably also be asking our parent body to be extra vigilant around hygiene and social distancing, as well as being alert to possible symptoms within their own households. We will look to see where we can progress with our curriculum, determine where our children are and what needs they have before we can effectively plan for groups. We also need to consider how we can continue with home learning for all, including year groups that are in, but whose pupils remain at home. The staff's main priority on our pupil's return will be their emotional well-being and mental health. We fully understand the impact that this time may have had and how hard it may be for some to return to a very different looking school day.

We also know that we will need to stagger drop-off and pick-up times with markings outside to support social distancing. Our school will use signs and floor markings to help the children maintain distances and follow a one-way system. Certain events will not be possible, including our Enrichment Day, Sports Day and assemblies. We will do our very best to make this an 'adventure', to help it seem friendly and normal for our pupils, and we will consider very carefully how to support our pupils with transitions. We are especially mindful of our wonderful year 6 pupils and the need to ensure they get the best send-off that we can possibly give them. We are working hard on planning how to support our younger pupils to transition to their next classes too.

So currently we are in a situation where there are as many questions as there are answers, but please be assured we are working tirelessly to make this as safe as possible for our children and families and staff. Ultimately we want our pupils back at school, we miss them. However, we are determined to do this in the safest way possible and to keep you, as parents, as informed as possible. I will write to you very soon with a firm plan and guidance, but if you have any comments to make or questions to ask, please do not hesitate to contact me at headteacher@capel-tonbridge.kent.sch.uk.

With all the best

From our family to yours

Special Song Request Reminder

Mrs Haffenden has a very special favour to ask! She would like all the children to have a listen to, and try to learn the song below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rT2cB7w2aLY>

It is a fantastic song with a positive and uplifting message. Once we are all back together, it will be amazing to sing it as one. Please feel free to send us any clips of your efforts. Thank you.

We are so excited to tell you that our Guinea-pigs are arriving in school on Monday. Their home is all set up and ready and the staff at school have had the very important job of finding out their names. We put all your ideas into two hats, one for each guinea-pig. The names drawn were.....

Luna and Star

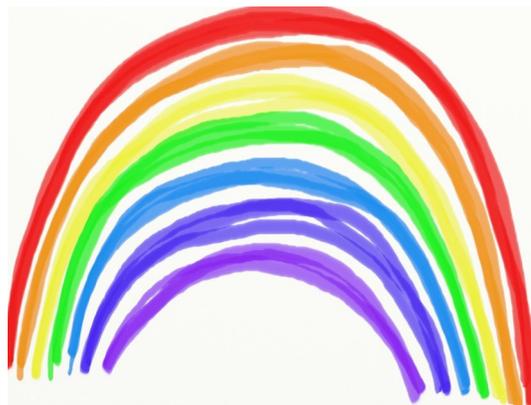
I must now confess, I don't have the list of pupils who suggested the names. Please can you let us know if either of these was your choice!

Pictures will be in next week's newsletter so you can see them settling into their new home.

THANK YOU

We would like to say a huge Thank you to Christiana and her Mum who have donated some fantastic face shields to the school. We are so grateful that you thought of us and appreciative of the equipment.

We would also like to thank Ros Coley who has donated carpet tiles to the school. They will be ideal for spacing the children out when sitting outside or in other spaces.



Support from KCC for parents

The local authority are keen to ensure that all families know about, and have access to further mental health resources and support in Kent. We would like to share with you the following resources:

If families or children are not sure what support is needed, then they can call the Single Point of Access (SPA) on 0300 123 4496 to talk through what information, advice and support might be appropriate. This is also the number to call if a child needs urgent mental health support.

For people of all ages needing immediate mental health support, just text the word "Kent" or "Medway" to 85258. This is a new 24/7 text service provided by SHOUT and the Crisis Text Line as part of the Kent and Medway Release the Pressure campaign.

Kooth is a mental health and wellbeing online platform for young people aged 10 to 16 across the whole of Kent. The service is free and can be accessed at www.kooth.com. It's a place to get advice, information and support 24/7. Young people can chat to a friendly qualified counsellor Monday to Friday between 12 noon and 10pm and Saturday and Sunday between 6pm and 10pm.

Accessing www.moodspark.org.uk or www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk to learn about mental health and find tips and resources to keep emotionally healthy.

Texting ChatHealth for support around physical and mental health on 07520 618850. The number is monitored Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Self-referring to the Children and Young People's Counselling Service at www.kentcht.nhs.uk/forms/school-health-service-referral-form

Accessing the Big White Wall if aged 16+ for anonymous support through <https://www.bigwhitewall.com>