

School Reopening Roadmap re Covid19

15/5/20 update

This particular update comes a day later than I hoped. I've rewritten it several times. Why? The government sent yet further guidance last night, shortly after we had completed all models for safe return to school, based on the documentation from Tuesday night. Then, as before, the most recent guidance raised more questions which have to be answered before choosing a model. We will not move until we have assurances that guidance is based on the priority of health above all.

The process of planning for reopening has involved a complete remodelling of pupil vulnerability strategies, existing class timetabling, timings of the day, pupil flow, signage, on-premises staffing, resources (being added, removed or modified), staff timetabling (mindful of contract expectations), staff vulnerability factors and management of external providers; all involving social distancing factors. Our models currently continue to attempt to maintain proper social distancing expectations, regardless of the current guidance indicating that primary schools can relax social distancing. We still await concrete assurances about social distancing alterations.

Locally and across the country you will see that schools have to act individually due to the vast differences in their premises and population. Due to the huge range of opinions amongst parents about what the government is asking schools to do, it is important for us to manage your expectations about the planning milestones for Ladygrove:

- The SLT have been working on models for reopening, this includes a lengthy Recovery Plan covering all foreseen issues and risks. Our overarching rationale is that we start low and increase the population with confidence, rather than make any misstep by doing everything at once.
- This plan goes to final consultation with staff over the weekend.
- It then goes to our school governors for their scrutiny and feedback (this is a group made up of a balanced cross section of parents with children across the school as well as community members).
- We will then send you the outline and relevant specific parts of this plan.
- At the same time we will send out a Google Form which asks (once you've seen the plan) whether you intend to send your child back to school if/when school opens for them. [It is important to note that there is **no penalty or negative record** for choosing to keep your child at home under the current guidance. We will only ask for this information to help finalise our plans onsite and to be sure that we know who is supposed to be present at school].
- The plan will be finalised and we will continue to communicate its progress with you through these updates. As you can imagine the plan might be delayed or even removed but we will keep you informed no matter what.

The ultimate Recovery Plan will have gone through those previous weeks of collaborative leadership debate, then whole staff analysis and finally governor scrutiny by the time it is finished. It will be rigorous.

Critical worker onsite childcare

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If you previously signed up with us as a critical worker you still have the right to take a place using our emergency childcare, if there is no other way to look after your child at home. If you need to do this, email the office- you will be asked standard questions so we can verify your suitability. Please note that this group remains the highest priority group even after other year groups eventually begin to return.

Parents of those children who are vulnerable or have an EHCP: Carol Turner (SENCo) will continue to call you each week. She uses the "SEND risk assessment during the coronavirus outbreak" guidance to discuss your child's schooling with you. When school eventually starts to reopen we will continue to use this guidance as it is a useful way to discuss provision for your child. A detailed risk assessment, which will consider the views of the school, your family and appropriate external agencies (alongside the safety and needs of your child) will inform any changes to provision.

Contact

The school office is still running entirely virtually, please email office.2609@ladygrove-park.oxon.sch.uk with any urgent queries or relevant updates to personal circumstances.

12/5/2020 update

Implementation of 'Phase 2' (reopening to priority year groups possibly in June)

As expected, the Prime Minister gave a general announcement on Sunday evening and the DfE guidance was released on Monday afternoon. Over the last 24 hours we have been analysing hundreds of pages across a number of brand new documents and continuously debating and modelling the guidance to create fine detail for implementation at Ladygrove.

The guidance is thorough but not exhaustive. We would have hoped to start sharing plans with you now but the guidance raises some questions which have to be further addressed by educational experts on our behalf. For example, we need assurances of the thinking behind relaxing social distancing in schools while also not needing to wear face coverings, even though this is a strengthened expectation in general society.

This further debate with the government might cause the guidance to be revised or at least to be clarified, on the basis of the science. We will stand firm on prioritising health implications when making final decisions.

For this reason, we will wait until the next response and clarification before communicating final decisions and we will immediately update you on what is known as Phase 2 (the possible June limited reopening to Year 6, Nursery, Reception and Year 1).

Other Term 6 Matters

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Reports

Teachers begin to write reports on their children from Term 5 onwards. These are sent to you in July. This year we will send out end of year reports as normal but the format will be different. Due to the usual process of typesetting, writing and proofreading being completely offsite and the more limited amount of subject content, we opted to make the report a more basic format. It will appear as a long letter with title headings for each of the subjects which have been covered at school. The content such as subject progress and next steps will remain the same.

Residential and Trip Refunds

We held on as long as possible but it is clear now that no trips will take place (including swimming and residential). As stated previously, our intention is to refund trips. We can only refund when we ourselves obtain the refund from the organisations involved. This is often not straightforward- we don't simply have a pot of contributed money from which we repay. We are having to chase various companies and insurance companies for it. Be assured that refunds will be with you as soon as we obtain them.

Exams

Schools have been told to use predicted grades and progress monitoring to assign grades for pupils in the absence of any formal tests this year. In primary school progress is monitored like this anyway until the SATs at Year 6. In years other than Year 6, teachers use tests as one factor in their overall judgement for each pupil. This will be the same this year, all teachers will use what they know to make a judgement on pupils' progress up until lockdown started. We are also lucky that we happened to undertake the mid year assessment week across school just before we went into lockdown and therefore have solid information going forward.

Year 6 Exams and transition

For Year 6 the SATs would have been their first formal national test which would give them an outcome based on whether they achieved the expected level. Parents with older siblings may remember that pupils used to be given grades between 3 and 6. This system was superseded nationally 4 years ago. It now simply records whether a child reached the 'expected level for Year 6' or not. Year 6 teachers will be giving these provisional outcomes to Year 6 for the end of this year however, you can rest assured that this is only a very minor part of their transition to secondary. Secondary schools all retest pupils in Year 7 (usually called CATs), there is an in depth transfer online transfer process during which the schools talk to each other and share information. This has been taking place as normal during lockdown and will continue until the pupils go to secondary. Furthermore, sometimes dialogue continues between schools into Year 7 if necessary. The link is strong.

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your suitability. As stated again by the prime minister, this child care is still only open to critical workers and vulnerable children, unfortunately this does not include parents who are now being required by their work to attend the workplace. This system remains in place to ensure numbers remain low at the school and social distancing can continue to be carried out effectively at this time. If your workplace puts pressure on you to argue for child care at the school please direct them to the DfE. The DfE will officially repeat this position for them.

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