



Headteacher
Mr. Dale Bateman

Coopersale and Theydon Garnon C. of E. V.C Primary School

Brickfield Road,
Coopersale,
Epping,
CM16 7QX

Tel: 01992574890

Email: admin@coopersaletheydongarnon.essex.sch.uk
Website: www.coopersaletheydongarnon.essex.sch.uk

Friday 22nd May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

School re-opening plans from Monday 1st June 2020

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the parents and carers for the support you have given the school during this difficult time.

From Monday 1st June, we are continuing (as we have done since 20th March) to open the school for our key worker families and our vulnerable children. Since our last communication to parents, there has been an increase in the number of families requesting keyworker places from June 1st onwards. With this in mind, school leaders have worked to balance the increase in pupil numbers whilst being absolutely certain that our risk assessment arrangements limit the chance of any coronavirus infection taking place. Our stringent risk assessments, although thorough, robust and malleable to change, does not give an absolute guarantee in keeping both children and staff safe. As we all know children staying at home is still a much safer alternative for most, because social distancing can easily be maintained.

In addition, school leaders have been faced with a 40% shortage of our staffing team unable to work on site, classed as clinically vulnerable or at a higher risk to infection. **With this in mind, and the safety of our children and staff being our paramount concern, the school is not in a position to provide a re-opening for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, from June 1st as requested by our government.** I'd like to clarify at this point, that as Headteacher, I make the final decision to re-open our school, based on the results of our risk assessments and keeping in line with guidance from our local authority and trade unions.

Moving forward, once safely possible and guided by our risk assessment arrangements, we will continue to aim towards a date where we welcome the return of more priority groups. It is also important to understand that the government will only make the final decision on whether to press ahead with the reopening of schools when it reviews the latest science on May 28th, and that if the evidence does not support this decision at that time, it will be delayed.

Please be advised that although the government encourage a school return for priority groups, **it is not compulsory to do so.**

There will not be any fines issued due to non-attendance.

Who can now attend school and from when?

- From June 1st, key worker children recognised by the school, will be welcomed back.
- From June 1st, vulnerable pupils including those with an attached social worker or an EHCP, will be welcomed back.
- If you have not already informed the school this week, anyone who thinks their child now qualifies for a place in school as a child of a key worker, a vulnerable child or a child with an EHCP, should contact the Headteacher via the following email address: keyworker@coopersaletheydongarnon.essex.sch.uk
- From June 1st onwards, the school will be strictly following the 'Bubble Group' social distancing method. This is where children in a bubble only have contact with the same children and staff, and neither staff nor children within the bubble have contact with anyone else whilst on the school site – thus assisting the 2m social distancing guidance as recommended by government and Public Health England.
- Children cannot attend if they, or a family member they live with, have symptoms of Covid-19.
- Any children who are 'extremely clinically vulnerable' should not attend school.
- If someone in your household is 'extremely clinically vulnerable' (shielded), the DfE guidance states that pupils should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to. This means that the child is able to understand and follow those instructions. As school leaders we believe this is only possible for our older year groups.

How will the school ensure appropriate cleaning measures and Health and Safety is put in place?

- Each bubble group will have the same staff members on a continuous rota – with no changes unless required. We cannot guarantee where each of our staff members will be placed for June 1st, as pupil numbers in each group will decide staffing arrangements. There is a good chance that your child's class teacher, will not be in their bubble group during this partial school closure period. A reminder that 40% of our school staff are not available to work on site just yet and this does include 3 teachers and half of our learning support team.
- Our school will be closed over the half term. We reopen to key worker families and vulnerable children from June 1st onwards.
- This week, the school has undergone a deep clean in preparation for more pupil groups to be welcomed back in June.
- The school has one cleaner, who cleans the school daily– focussing on all used spaces for that day. The site manager assists in cleaning tasks daily.
- During the school day, staff within set bubble groups will have access to a variety of cleaning products, ranging from anti-bacterial, anti-viral and disinfectant type cleaners.
- Each bubble group is based in a classroom with a sink, giving access to anti-bacterial soap. Staff within each bubble monitor hand washing and it will be completed regularly across the school day. Hand sanitiser is provided within each bubble group for both staff and pupils to use when they wish.
- Each bubble group is allocated with their own school toilets.
- All soft furnishings and cushions will be either removed from the classrooms, or stored appropriately in the class, out of reach of the children.

- We will always try to maintain safe distancing in school but please be aware this will be challenging, especially with our younger children.
- There is no expectation that staff will routinely wear face coverings. However, staff may wear PPE in very specific circumstances at their own will.
- Children may wear PPE, however if worn incorrectly, the group leader will have the right to request the child to remove the item – in particular if it is deemed to be a higher risk of possible infection spread. This decision will be final, and we will insist the PPE is only worn the following day if the parents guarantee further training in its proper use. The school is not in a position to provide pupils with PPE.
- Please also note that, especially with our younger children, it is possible that a member of our staff may have to comfort your child if they become distressed.
- *The mental health of our children must be at the forefront of our minds as school staff and parents. Our children may not be the most at risk group from coronavirus, but they are most definitely at risk of long term mental health issues, with all that they are dealing with on a phased return to school. Parents and staff must ensure pupils are given time to ask questions regarding the coronavirus pandemic and what is now the new normal.*

What will happen at lunchtime?

- All children will eat in their assigned classroom, at their own desks.
- A bottle of water, labelled, must be brought in to school by each child. School water fountains will not be accessible and where children require a refill of their bottles, this will be done using a water jug placed in each group's room.
- Currently the school is not able to access the free fruit scheme for our KS1 pupils. All children will need to bring in healthy snacks from home, to eat at break time, labelled and in a bag.
- Children will be allowed to bring in their own packed lunch – in a labelled bag. It will be stored on a clean, disinfected shelf, for them to gain access to whilst supervised.
- The school's kitchen will be preparing a cold lunch/dinner menu (packed lunch in a bag). Packed lunches will be delivered to classrooms by kitchen staff, ensuring no children are wandering around the school at lunch and breaking social distancing measures. The adjusted school menu will be released to parents over the half term and placed on our website and linked to the school app. *We are not able to accept cash or cheque payments for the moment; you must use the school's new online payment system, '+Pay on Parent Mail'. See my previous newsletter dated April 2nd for advice on our new online payment system. The letter can be found on the school app/school website.*
- Universal free school meals' arrangements apply for all Reception and KS1 pupils on site for lunchtime. Children entitled to Free School Meals, and who are eating at school, will also be entitled to free school dinners. All other children will be required to pay for their lunches (online payment only at this time).
- For those pupils who will still be at home and entitled to FSM, we will continue to arrange for e-vouchers to be delivered to you. These will not be available over the half term break.

What will children need to bring/wear?

- Children will be able to wear casual, but suitable clothes to school during our phased re-opening. School uniforms can be worn if preferred, but this is not essential. No PE kit is allowed on site, including additional footwear. We therefore encourage whatever your child wears to school, to be suitable for PE activities. Other areas of our school uniform apply, such as long hair to be tied up, and hair accessories to be small in size.
- Jewellery, must be in line with our normal school policy, and if ear studs are worn, the child must be able to remove them independently.
- No school bags should be brought to school.
- Each child will have their own desk and chair, with a tray of essential writing and learning resources for the day, provided by the school. These trays will be cleaned and stored away daily.
- Weather appropriate clothing items, such as a sunhat.
- Please apply sun cream before school (as required)

The start/end of the day

- **Key worker's Reception children will start at 9.00am and end at 2.45pm.**
- **Key worker's Years 1 and 2 children will start at 9.15am and end at 3.15pm**
- **Key worker's Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will start at 9.00am and end at 3.00pm**
- **Parents must ensure children are not on site more than 5 minutes before their start time, and lateness by parents to collect children will not be tolerated – unless for exceptional circumstances that the school has been informed of and agrees to. Our staff and cleaners must be given as much time as possible for after school resource preparations and cleaning of the site.**
- All drop off and collections will be in the main playground. One adult only should accompany each child, and social distancing when walking on to the school premise must be followed. School signage will guide you in a one-way system and ensure that 2m social distancing rule applies at potential bottle neck areas, such as the handover zone of your child to a staff member etc.
- No child or parent should gather with others when on the school grounds for drop off or collection times.
- No use of the school play equipment or seating areas must be used by younger siblings or parents during the drop off/collection times.
- If you are expecting to drop your child off at school late or collect early, you must phone the school office on the day. In these cases, you will be asked to wait at the designated collection point at the front of the school and wait for a member of the staff to come to you.
- We do not want any sustained physical conversations with our staff by parents, please request a phone/email conversation by contacting the office or sending an email to the school.

How will I be able to access the school if I have a query?

- In the mornings, the school office will be open for emergency messages only. However, you are encouraged to phone the office or email, if you can.
- In the afternoons, the front office will not be available to parents.
- If delivering medicines to the office for your child, do be prepared and have all details and medicines in original packets with your child's name on them.
- Measures will be in place for only one person to be in the front office reception area at a time.

Will Home Learning still be continuing?

- Remote learning will continue for all year groups, updated weekly on our school website by Sunday afternoons.
- For those who cannot access the online home learning provided by the school, we have packs available for collection (this must be an arranged time)
- Class emails will continue to be monitored, however this may not be by the class teacher, due to them working on site.
- If your child is not attending school, we need to maintain regular contact with you to ensure their welfare and safeguarding.

Next Steps

We appreciate that making a decision about your child returning to school may be difficult for you. However, for your child to return to school for June 1st, you must have at least one key worker in the immediate family unit where your child lives, or your child would have an attached social worker/an EHCP. Most families have already passed this information on to the school during our communications with you over the last two weeks.

On Friday 29th May and no earlier or later, we are requesting confirmation from each key worker family, to email your final decision if you are intending on your child returning to school or not, from June 1st. Please email you child's full name and class that they are in. Send responses to: keyworker@coopersaletheydongarnon.essex.sch.uk

A reminder on Friday 29th May, will be sent to all families via the school jotter app, requesting the above particular details regarding reopening of school from June 1st for key worker families. This information is essential in order for school leaders to make any last minute alterations to our staffing rota, ensuring also that we adhere to group sizes no larger than 15 pupils, or as decided by the Headteacher, due to the spaces available.

As a key worker, If you decide not to send your child on June 1st, you may decide at a later date, that you would like them to return. We will only be accepting new returners on the Monday of each week, so if you decide that you do not want them to return on 1st June, the earliest start date will be Monday 8th June. You will need to let us know by the Thursday prior to this date (4th June) if you wish them to return on 8th June. The same will apply to following weeks, we will need to know by the Thursday prior to their return on the Monday.

Many thanks for your continued support

Mr D Bateman

Headteacher