

Benhurst Primary School

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Tuesday 12th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Potential School Return Update

Yesterday evening, the government shared more detailed information regarding the potential return of primary schools in June. I do understand that this has been met with mixed feelings and would like to acknowledge that this is a decision which must be taken by each family with deep thought and care. As a school, we will work carefully within the government guidelines and with the safety of our children staff and parents as our primary concern.

Below are key questions and answers that have been taken from the guidance.

Why can more children now attend school and childcare settings?

The government want children to return into education as soon as the scientific advice allows. They anticipate with further progress, this may be possible for some children from Monday 1st June. The 5 key tests set by government will be used to justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the recovery strategy are operating effectively. As a result, they are asking schools to plan on this basis, ahead of confirmation that these tests are met.

Can my child return to school?

From Monday 1st June, it is planned to offer school places to:

- Key Worker children (as currently exists)
- Clearly identified vulnerable children (as currently exists)
- Children from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

What if my child is eligible but has siblings who are not?

This does not include siblings in different year groups unless those siblings



Should I keep my child at home if they have an underlying health condition or live with someone in a clinically vulnerable group?

Children who are considered [extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding](#) should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend.

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

Children who live in a household with someone who is [extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding](#) should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Children who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) as defined in the [social distancing guidance](#) and including those who are pregnant, can attend.

How will risks to children, teachers and families be managed?

School will operate in a very different way and will include the following:

- Children will be in new classes of up to 15. They may not be with their current teacher or in their usual classroom; this very much depends on the demand for places and staffing implications. This new class will spend the full school day together and not mix with other classes - restriction is to be limited where possible.
- Initial learning will be via Google Classroom activities. Additional sessions will also be planned to supplement this. We are being encouraged to offer outside learning where possible (e.g. PE, Science, Art).
- Staggered start/end to the day (this will be close to the 8:50 to 3:30 times). Entry to the school will be via Benhurst Avenue only and exit via Warren Drive.
- Staggered break/lunch.
- Cleaning hands regularly (e.g. on arrival, before/after eating, after sneezing or coughing).
- Remove soft furnishings, soft toys and toys from classrooms which are hard to clean.
- Large outside play equipment (e.g. KS2 gym) is unlikely to be available.
- Small play equipment may be used but should be cleaned after use.
- Stationary and equipment should not be shared where possible.

What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in my child's school?

When a child or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and children who are attending school will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus.

Where the child or staff member tests positive, the rest of their school class should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class do not need to self-isolate unless the child or staff



What do I need to do now?

All parents who have children eligible to return to school in June (Key Worker children, identified vulnerable children and children from Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) must complete the Google survey by Friday 15th May - even if you do not wish for your child to return to school. This will allow us to start work on the plans ahead of our potential return.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfhPMwfGjBIYc5ZTxt74qGn8sUgZl9Pv7KiiBpCQD84T3qsmg/viewform?usp=sf_link

There is a lot of information for you to digest in this letter and important decisions to make about your family. At this time, I would urge you to carefully consider what is best for your family and not be swayed by the news, social media or friends. Each family situation is unique.

I would like nothing more than to welcome every child, member of staff and parent back to school. We all miss our school community and will be together again, but not yet.

For those children, staff and parents who do return to Benhurst in June, school will look and feel very different as we will be operating in a very different way - but one which we must all strictly follow.

Remember to contact us if we can help in any way. You are doing a great job and are not on your own!

Take care and stay safe.



Mr D Denchfield
Head Teacher