



Ryhope Infant School Academy
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Headteacher: Mrs T Allen

15th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

You probably watched the Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday night, just as we did. He stated that schools may return after half term and towards the beginning of June, for certain year groups. Further guidance from the Department for Education regarding the possibility of the wider opening of the school from 1st June states:

Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020> that under the heading Class sizes and staff availability settings should prioritise groups of children as follows:

- early years settings– 3 and 4 year olds followed by younger age groups
- infant schools - nursery (where applicable) and reception
- primary schools – nursery (where applicable), reception and year 1

As we are an Infant School we will be following the guidance and prioritising **Nursery** and **Reception**.

As you can imagine reopening to two full year groups is going to take a lot of planning and despite getting initial guidelines we are still waiting for further clarification both from the Government, Department for Education and the Local Authority.

Our main priority is the safety of our children, yourselves and our staff. How we keep everyone safe within our school is our biggest concern at the moment.

I'm sure you will appreciate that social distancing is almost impossible with young children, however we are looking at reducing the number of children and adults in a room and spreading the groups across more classrooms to reduce the possibility of groups of children and adults mixing with other groups. Staffing will be different and your child will most likely not be with their class teacher but this is so we can ensure our groups of children mix with as few adults as possible whilst at school. The groups will remain in the same room whilst they are in school, including having their lunch in that classroom, and they will have an assigned outdoor area, so again, there will be no mixing of groups.

Staggered drop off and collection times will be arranged to avoid lots of parents gathering at the same time.

With all of the above in mind and following further guidance from official bodies I am, at this moment in time, proposing:

- Each **Nursery** child will be allocated to a group of no more than 15 children (this is the maximum number of children I feel we can have in our Nursery classroom to allow for as much space as possible per child).
- **Nursery** children will be assigned to either full day Monday/Tuesday or full day Thursday/Friday. (The room and resources will be cleaned on Wednesday in preparation for the second group)
- Each **Reception** child will be allocated to a group of no more than 10 children (this is the maximum number of children I feel we can have in one of our classrooms to allow for as much space as possible per child).

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- Access to the school will be a one way system, coming in through the school gates and exiting via the gate on the yard and out through the carpark gates.
- Strictly one adult per family can accompany children to the site at any one time, ideally this will be the same adult each day.
- There will be no collective gatherings including assemblies, lunchtime and playtimes.
- Each group will arrive at school and leave school at staggered times.
- Children will remain in the same small groups at all times each day, and different groups will not mix during the day, or on subsequent days.
- The same adults will be assigned to each group and, as far as possible, these will stay the same on subsequent days.
- Regular handwashing throughout the day.
- Regular cleaning of surfaces in the classroom.

I know that many parents and family members will have worries, concerns and lots questions regarding children returning to school. I hope this letter gives everyone an initial understanding of what we are doing as a school. I will provide further clarification as and when I get it.

In order for school to continue with planning arrangements please could you indicate if it is your intention for your child to return to school on 1st June 2020 by contacting the school by one of the below methods:

- Email – info@ryhopeinfantschool.org.uk
- Telephone – 0191 9171910 and leave a message on the school answerphone.

Thank you for your support at this very difficult and challenging time.

Kind regards



Mrs T Allen

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