



Christ Church C of E Junior School
London Road
Ramsgate, Kent
CT11 0ZZ
Tel: 01843 593350
Email: headteacher@christ-church-ramsgate.kent.sch.uk

15th May 2020

Dear Parent/Carers,

I hope that you and your family are keeping safe and well. Following the announcement on Sunday evening, the last few days have seen us collating and examining the information available to establish what it means for us as a country, and how schools can support parents in returning to work, whilst fulfilling our duty to keep children and staff safe. Although we still have more questions than answers, I feel some communication with you about the announcement is important, even at this early stage - particularly as a lot of the media coverage can be misleading.

As the week has progressed we have gradually received more information further detailing government expectation for schools. One message that has been repeated over and over is that every school is different, so each school's approach will vary with regard to re-opening. As a result of this, we as a school have completed a detailed risk assessment, where we aim to deliver the government's instructions in line with the needs of our school and community. One thing that has become very evident is that when the children return to school, our duty to keep them safe will mean that our school will look very different from the school they last saw in March, due to the number of changes that we are being asked to implement.

To reiterate, at this stage the government have asked us as a junior school to **open on the 1st June, initially for our Year 6 cohort**. This is at the moment dependent upon certain 'criteria' being met before this date. At this time this criteria has not been met and so schools are at present only open for a small number of keyworker/vulnerable children. It is important to understand that unless the country meets this criteria, it is unlikely that schools will be reopened. It is also important to understand that we will probably not know this information for sure until late in May, which is why we are making plans at this stage, which are very liable to change, as more information becomes available. However, at this time it would be good to communicate our thoughts with you before you make the decision to send your children back to school or not.

We believe the following are some of the adjustments necessary to keep everyone safe:

- We have calculated that we can only accommodate 12 children in each classroom. The classroom will be the base for each 'bubble' and where children eat lunch as well as work. Children will have an allocated seat with their own equipment provided by the school. This cannot be shared and children will not be able to freely move around the classroom, in order to enable the social distancing specified.
- Children will initially be taught by both a teacher and a teaching assistant. This pattern will continue with a rota of staff, but will be dependent upon staffing levels. It is intended that each learning group will only have contact with 2 teachers and 2 TAs overall as part of this rota. Most children will not be taught by their normal class teacher, although their normal class teacher will oversee planning. If staffing levels reduce, some classes may be taught by teaching assistants.



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- Drop off times will be staggered in the morning, as well as pick up times at the end of the day, so the school day is likely to be shorter than normal - if indeed we are not forced to offer a morning or afternoon session only. In addition, parents will need to say goodbye to children at either of the school gates (either on St. Mildred or London Road) in the morning. When collecting children, government guidance recommends that the school operates a one way system. The entrance for this will be via St. Mildred's Road and the exit via London Road. We understand that this will be inconvenient for people, but is necessary in order to maintain social distancing.

- Children will only be able to socialise with the children in their learning group throughout the day including break and lunchtimes. Break and lunchtimes will also be staggered to allow only one group on the playground at a time and access to equipment will be minimal. We would ask children not to bring any equipment in from home as they do have a tendency to share!

-Edenred vouchers will continue for all children eligible for free school meals and still at home. However, the school kitchen will also reopen on June the 1st and provide lunch for those children eligible for free school meals and attending school.

- Although we are relatively confident that Year 6 children would be able to broadly maintain social distancing and we will only plan activities that meet this criteria, we will not be able to guarantee that they will be 2m apart at all times.

- We will continue to consolidate and reinforce previous learning for those attending school and continue to make home learning available to the rest of the school (Years 3-5 and Year 6 children not attending).

- If a child or a member of staff displays symptoms of COVID-19, they will be isolated from the other children and sent home. They will need to begin self-isolation from this point. They will also need to register immediately for a COVID-19 test, for which they will be eligible under new government guidelines. If the results of the test are positive, then the entire learning group and staff associated with this group will have to self-isolate for 14 days. If it is negative, then they may return to school when well enough to do so.

- The government has, at this point, recommended that no children or staff wear any PPE of any sort, including face masks. At this time we are unsure how to keep staff and children safe in the event of first aid having to be administered or, how to support them should they have any other type of accident - this will be addressed in final plans though.

I would like to reiterate that we all want nothing more than for children to return to school and for parents to be able to return to work, but to do so safely. Hopefully, you will feel reassured that we are looking at how we can put the government's announcement in place as safely as possible for both your children and staff and feel informed about some of the changes that will be necessary to implement this.



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Finally, I fully support the government in their assertion that it will remain the parents' decision whether to send their children in or not and would like to emphasise that both the government and local authority have clarified that there will be no repercussions for parents should they choose not to do so. With this in mind, and to help us in preparing for the possibility of schools re-opening after half term, it would be very useful for us to know how many parents plan to send their child in to school. **If you have a child in Year 6 would you please email the office at office@christ-church-ramsgate.kent.sch.uk or call 07368 187534 by Monday to indicate, should the school reopen, whether or not you plan to send in your child in.** This is only an indication of your intentions at this point, you would of course be free to change your mind at any time.

Keep safe,

N. Tucker

Neil Tucker



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