



Coates Primary School



Coates Primary School
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Dear Parents/ Carers,

Rationale and Further Detail

Thank you for your patience in awaiting our response to the Government announcement that primary schools could begin a phased re-opening from 1st June at the earliest. Whilst the government has published its aspirations for this re-opening, based on the infection rate continuing to fall, it has been made clear that the ultimate decision on whether we believe it is safe to open falls with Headteachers and the Local Authority.

Looking forward, we want to expand this support to as many families as we can, whilst ensuring we make the school a safe place for children and staff.

It remains very unclear whether the 1st June will be the date that we believe it is safe to begin phasing a return to school. Our first priority will continue to be to provide places for the children of critical workers and vulnerable pupils. The Government has proposed that any phased re-opening would next be for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 in that priority order; the Government's guidance for parents can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>.

Current Government guidance is that schools manage the increase in pupil numbers by having classes of no more than 15 pupils. They acknowledge, however, that 15 children per class may not provide enough space for social distancing. As such, we have calculated how many pupils we can cater for depending on the room size. This will, at least in theory, allow for social distancing if assessed by square meterage. Further government advice includes retaining these as permanent small groups, with a specified adult. Groups will not be allowed to interact with each other during the day, including at playtimes and lunchtimes, which will need to be staggered. Parents will have to provide packed lunches or have a pick and mix option for at least the first week.

Following current government guidance about the return of workers, a number of our staff will continue to need to work from home; their role could be to manage the home-learning for the children who are not back at school.

Staff who show symptoms or live in a household with anyone who does, must self-isolate until they have been tested and cleared, so some contingency must also be built into our plans.

This phased plan aims to incorporate all three year groups. However, if all pupils in Reception and Year 1 were to take up their place we may not be able to accommodate Year 6 whilst social distancing measures continue to be in place. Once we have more information on uptake of pupil numbers, we will plan how the phased return may look like for groups.

As we have limited spaces, it is very important that the groups are consistent and that only those who are able to commit to their children taking up **full-time places** do so. There are two main reasons for requiring parents to take up places for their children on a full-time basis only:

1. To enable the groups of children and their allocated adults to remain consistent throughout the week, creating a 'bubble' approach recommended by scientists to keep the number of interactions to a minimum.
2. To enable the curriculum, including guided groups, to be taught consistently.

In order to ensure that the school is safe we would like to clarify that if your child is in school several exceptional measures will be in place:

- They will need to be in **full-time** unless they are ill or self-isolating as a result of another family member being ill.
- Where possible, children will be placed in groups with those of similar ages, but friendship groups will not be considered.
- Key worker children will be placed in specific groups and therefore may not be grouped with children of similar ages. (Yrs 2,3,4 and 5)
- They will continue to follow the home-learning curriculum.
- They could be taught by any class teacher or teaching assistant for the entire period.
- In cases where staff are absent, we may have to cancel provision for that bubble for that day or period of time.
- They will remain in one classroom space for all sessions and will eat their lunch in that room. Visits to the toilet will be timetabled.
- All children will be required to bring a packed lunch, or have a pick and mix school meal option for at least the first week.
- Poor behaviour will be firmly managed; we will not have the capacity to deal repeatedly with individuals.
- They will have regular outdoor sessions per day with their 'bubble' group.
- The times of the school day will be altered to ensure staggered entry and exit from school. They must only be accompanied by one adult from their own household.
- No items apart from their coat, bag (with lunch box) should be brought into school.
- PE days will be allocated and pupils will be required to wear their PE kit for the whole day.
- Reading book changing will be communicated to parents.
- Parents/carers should check their child's temperature before they come on to the school site.
- Children **must not** be sent to school if they or anyone that they live with has any of the symptoms related to COVID19.

The main protection for staff and children is through maintaining the same small contact group. It is therefore extremely important that families act responsibly with regard to social distancing measures outside of school premises. Where breaches are reported, the phased school place may well be withdrawn.

Those parents/carers who do not believe it is safe to send their child back to school yet are not obliged to do so; it has been confirmed that no family will be fined for non-school attendance at this time.

We therefore request that all families answer our survey by 9pm on Wednesday 20th May.

The survey will be sent via Parentmail to all parents. A survey must be completed for every Coates pupil in your household. There is a survey link for each year group.

This data is **essential** in order to get as many of our pupils in school as possible. Once we know who intends to take up places at each phase, we may be able to expand our offer. Please note that once a place is declined there will not be the opportunity for your child/ren to join school provision before the 22nd June and even at this date it is not guaranteed.

You may be interested in what school may look like with the changes to ensure social distancing. We will be providing photos of example spaces before Wednesday evening to give some idea of what the new layout looks like.

Parents who accept the offer will be given correspondence around staggered start times etc. prior to opening.

Thank you for your help, support and understanding. If you have any questions, specific uncertainties or just want to talk things over, please contact the school office. You are all doing such an amazing job right now. It is so sad that we're not able to have everyone back at school, but we can support everyone as much as we can so that those who will benefit most can return to school and everyone else can continue their learning at home. Keep sending us your pictures, photos and news – we enjoy seeing them so much in school.

Keep well and stay safe,

Kind regards



Mrs. Lindsey Boucher
Headteacher



Together we dream, believe and achieve!