



HORRINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Friday 22nd May 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers

Phased re-opening of schools – possible return for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

Thank you for all your replies last week in regards to the government's proposed staged re-opening of schools for certain groups of children from 1st June at the earliest.

As we wrote on the 15th May, the school's first duty is the health and safety of all our pupils and staff. This remains our priority for every stage of our planning.

This letter will focus on where we are currently as a school and the next steps for our school community. This is by necessity a long letter, so please could we ask that you read it carefully so key information is not missed.

Current situation

In order to help us complete the risk assessments for the phased re-opening at Horrington and to plan safely and effectively, we are:

- Using the government guidance for schools, as each document is published
- Working closely with the staff in school and the governors
- Using the responses from parents of keyworker and vulnerable children, as well as parents in Year R, 1 and 6 as an indication of the number of children we are potentially planning for
- Consulting with the school's Health and Safety advisers, Educating Safely
- Liaising with our County link adviser
- Discussing local arrangements with headteachers and staff from other local schools

Each school is completely individual in its structure, location, staffing etc. The particular challenges for our school include:

- Availability of space and the number of classrooms – we do not have sufficient space for all identified groups to return to school full-time under the current guidance.
- Discovery Classroom being out of use due to the storm damage and the timescales for repairs being delayed due to the lockdown – the repairs will now not take place before the summer break

- Limited storage for the large number of items that need to be removed from classroom areas as per government guidelines
- Number of staff who are able to work on school site at this time within the current guidance
- Location of the school site which requires careful consideration of drop-off and pick-up, particularly as parents are not able to enter school sites under the government guidance.
- Timescales to put in place all the measures required are very tight with a small team of staff.

Given all of the above our current risk assessments determines that we have provision for four isolated clusters. We cannot safely accommodate 15 children in all of the clusters so some groups need to be smaller than this.

Staged plan for re-opening

The governors, school leaders and staff have therefore planned for a phased re-opening which will have a number of stages. There will be regular reviews and the plans for the next stage will be modified as needed in the light of these reviews.

Initial stage

The school will be closed to all pupils over half term to enable the school to put all the protective measures in place. The phased plan is starting with an **INSET day on 1st June** to ensure staff have received the safety training that is required for the staged re-opening. Following County and Health and Safety advice, the governors unanimously approved moving our planned INSET from the 26th June to 1st June for this purpose. **The school will be closed to all pupils on this day.**

Stage 1 – beginning Tuesday 2nd June

Existing eligible groups – keyworker parents who contacted the school in March

Until this time, we have had very few eligible children (those being children of key workers and vulnerable pupils) attending each day. The majority of parents who contacted the school in March to provide evidence that they were key workers were able to keep their children at home during the lockdown period. In response to the letter we sent out last week, the majority of these keyworkers have now indicated that they will need to send their children to school for all or part of the week. These children remain the priority group as advised by the government. This is a significant number of children and therefore at Stage 1 of our phased re-opening we will only be able to accommodate key worker and vulnerable children at school.

We will be sending a separate letter and short questionnaire to our keyworker parents to ask them to confirm which days they are requesting their child attend school. The questionnaire will need to be completed by 26th May. With the number of parents on our current keyworker list, our risk assessments determine that we will require room and staffing for three isolated clusters. Where children do not attend every day of the week, we

still need to provide these three clusters as children cannot be mixed between clusters across different days of the week.

Additional requests from parents under the keyworker criteria

We have received additional parental requests over the past week for children to be able to attend school after half term under the criteria that a parent is a key worker. Please be aware that the categories for key workers are prescribed and unless you fit into one of the categories stated in the document below, your children will not be eligible to attend school. Where you do fit into one of the categories listed and you have confirmation from your employer that you are a critical worker you will be eligible to send your children in to school. We are therefore asking to see the employer confirmation letter, which should be scanned and sent to Horringtonparents@educ.somerset.gov.uk by Tuesday 26th May. The guidance states that the list of occupations are not prescriptive but clearly you will need to be in one of the headline sectors identified in the document.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

The school will confirm with parents that they have been offered provision for their child as a keyworker and when they will be able to attend. Parents can only bring children to the school if they have received written confirmation from the school.

At stage 1, we are therefore only offering provision for the significantly larger number of pupils whose parents are keyworkers and those classed as vulnerable. This is because we take health and safety very seriously and will only admit as many children as we can reasonably keep safe, and reduce the risks of Covid 19 in accordance with government guidance.

Children who are not in the keyworker or vulnerable pupil category

At Horrington, we will do everything we can to continue to provide the home learning as we have currently i.e. work will be emailed to parents on a Friday for the following week. Mrs McKie and our IT providers, Soft Egg, are making really good progress in the set-up of Google Classroom. After the set-up is complete, we will let you know and will begin a careful transition to this learning platform. In the initial stages, we will also continue to send work via email in case of teething issues.

The school staff will not, however, have the same capacity as now to make phone calls to our families as they will be working with the children in school. We will require all available staff to make the safety measures and social distancing needed work effectively. We remain committed to supporting you and your children. We will therefore be asking that you email Horringtonparents@educ.somerset.gov.uk if you would like to speak to a member of staff and we will get a member of staff to call you back as soon as we are able to.

Pupils attending school will be completing the same work as outlined in the home learning resources we are sending out each week, so it is important keyworker pupils complete the maths and English tasks at home on the set days if they are not attending for the full week.

Stage 2 – possible re-opening to other priority year groups identified by the government (date to be confirmed – and week beginning 8th June at the earliest)

We know we will not be able to open to children in Year R, Year 1 and Year 6 in the week beginning 1st June, even if the government announce this will be happening across the country. We need to monitor the provision and arrangements for the significantly higher numbers of keyworker and vulnerable pupils we have in school within stage 1 of our re-opening plan.

The school can only move to Stage 2 under the following conditions:

- Our weekly reviews at Stage 1 and ongoing risk assessments deem it is safe to re-open to more children than those in the keyworker and vulnerable group
- We have the rooms/ space to admit other small clusters of pupils.
- Sufficient staff are available to supervise these groups
- The government have announced schools can re-open to the other priority groups, those in Year R, Year 1 and Year 6

Parent responses have indicated that a number of parents do wish for their child to return, some parents have said they will not be sending their children back in the coming term and many parents, understandably, are unsure.

On this basis, we will not be able to offer full-time provision to all these year groups as there are already three clusters of children who are from keyworker families. It is likely therefore that the only way to facilitate in school learning for all of these three year groups at Stage 2 of our phased re-opening plan will be a part-time timetable.

Procedures and safety measures for children returning to school

The separate document attached to this letter outlines the procedures and safety measures for children returning to school. These measures have been drawn up using the government guidance, advice from our Health and Safety adviser and through our risk assessment process. There has been consultation with staff and approval from the governors.

We recognise this letter may not have addressed all of your queries. We have included as much information as we are able to at this time given the developing national situation and guidance available at the time of writing.

We will write again in the first week after half term with any updated information that we have. Thank you for all your understanding at this time.

Kind regards

Julie Williams