



20th May, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope this letter finds you safe and well. As part of the Rural Penrith Cluster of schools we would like to hopefully answer some of your questions and concerns regarding the eventual integration back to school.

General overview

Following the Government announcement last week about the possible and gradual re-entry to school after half term, The Department for Education, the Local Authority and Head teachers have all been working hard to work out what the government guidelines might actually look like in our cluster of rural schools. Schools are working hard to achieve a way forward; individual contexts vary greatly and schools have to risk assess their own environments to ensure the safety of all our schools which are different and one size does not fit all.

The prime aim across all of our schools remains to keep everyone as safe as possible within current constraints. In agreeing this model as a cluster of schools, we have taken into consideration the physical aspects of our schools, staffing capacity, pupil safety and staff safety.

After much consultation and reflection about our own school contexts, our cluster group of schools, including Governors, have agreed to operate a uniform model with slight variations according to individual schools. Other Clusters may have different approaches according to their own circumstances.

Are schools opening on 1st June?

The headline date of 1st June is the point at which schools can start to phase pupils back into schools, subject to further Government directive.

We feel it is very important to stress, that at this early stage, we cannot make any promises as to year groups, places or time scales and that provision may not be full time.

The Government have clearly stated that parents who choose not to send their children to school at this time **will not be penalised**.

What we have been asked to do:

Schools have been asked to:

- continue to provide for the children of critical workers, children with an EHCP and vulnerable children.
- Reintegrate Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils, where possible to do so safely, from 1st June if Government measures are met.
- Reintegrate Years 2, 3, 4 and 5, where possible to do so safely, towards the end of term, if Government measures are met.

What you need to consider as parents:

We feel that transparency is important, and indeed vital, in order that you can decide whether to send your child back to school. To this end these are some of the issues you need to consider:

- Whilst schools will work hard to minimise risk it will be impossible to negate it all together.
- Due to social distancing measures, some schools will not have the capacity both in space and staffing to open to all children at the same time and a staggered timetable may be necessary.
- Sadly, schools will not be able to operate as they did before for some time to come - The Government guidance is that a 'normal curriculum' will not be in place. Schools will continue to set work on their learning platforms for children who remain at home, but its delivery may differ from that which has been previously offered. We will continue to monitor and support this. Online / remote learning will continue for all pupils regardless of whether they attend school or not. For those children that come into school, this will form the basis of their work.
- The Government has said there is no need for PPE for children or staff unless a child becomes ill whilst in school.
- If your child has a shielding letter they should **NOT** attend school.
- If a child has someone who is shielding in their household (clinically extremely vulnerable - those with a GOV. letter) then they should **NOT** be sent to school.
- All schools have some staff who are clinically vulnerable, therefore staffing some classes may be difficult. In these instances, a teaching assistant may be asked to lead a group.
- There will be a maximum of 15 pupils per group within their own classroom space if space allows. They will be taught by 1 teacher or TA (plus an additional TA, if needed, or indeed, possible). This may not be your class teacher depending upon availability
- Groups of children will **not** be able to mix with each other and children within a group should remain **2 metres apart, where practicably possible**.
- Desks and seats will be separated (2m distance where possible) but as the Government has stated primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff at all times.
- Whilst children will be given opportunities to exercise and have breaks, distancing will still be taking place as far as possible during these times.
- There will be as little movement in school as possible, and groups will remain together throughout the day (including lunchtimes).
- Early years will not be play based as the Government has stated that all soft furnishings, toys and soft toys that cannot easily be cleaned every day, as well as any unnecessary items, should be removed from classrooms and stored elsewhere in the school.
- Parents/carers will not be able to enter school and must not gather at school gates or external doors. A staggered entry and collection may be implemented.
- There will be restrictions on children taking items back and forward from school.
- Children will have their own set of resources that only they will be able to use.

We will be taking care over our preparations to ensure that the school is as safe as possible. We would like to reassure you that we are, and will be, following the DfE guidance very closely and putting measures into place to create the safest school environment that we can in the circumstances.

Measures will include Health & Safety checks of the building and the water system and a thorough deep clean. We will also be undertaking a full and comprehensive Risk Assessment provided by the County Council and our Health & Safety Consultants.

What might happen in our cluster of schools?

- Schools will aim to open to vulnerable, children with an EHCP and Key Worker pupils by Monday 8th June. This is to allow transition from the shared hub model to the new gradual re-entry model.
- Schools may be open for identified pupils in phases and on different days.
- Learning will continue to be delivered through online platforms for all pupils

How can you help us to move forward?

In order to add finer detail to our initial outline, we would like to know your intentions based upon the above information. Please could you email school via admin@plumpton.cumbria.sch.uk by Friday 22nd May to let us know if you intend to send your children to school when directed, from the possible start date of 8th of June.

In conclusion

Health and Safety remains our prime concern across our cluster of schools. Schools can only begin the process of re-entry if it is safe to do so. Senior Leaders and Governors are continuing to plan how this can be done as safely as possible within the current constraints. We will continue to build on the good practice we developed prior to schools closing and from our experiences running a hub, new risk assessments and further government guidance. The safety of our pupils and staff will drive our future decisions.

Kind Regards,

S.L. Penny

Head teacher