



Merstham  
Primary School

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you are aware, we have been reviewing the guidance that the government has been providing over the past week with regards to planning for reopening our school to certain year groups after half term.

Our planning has been underpinned by two key principles:

- The safety of our children, our students and our staff is paramount; this includes their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. All our decisions are led by the welfare of children and staff, guided by the latest advice from government, PHE and other scientific evidence
- We must continue to provide children and students with the best quality learning that we are able to, given the circumstances.

I am setting out in this letter our current plans for after half term. It is important to note that the reopening of schools is subject to the government's 'five key conditions' being met and will be reviewed by the Government on Thursday 28 May. Updated guidance from the Government, PHE and other scientific advisers is being published daily and may cause us to review plans between now and 1 June. Any new cases of Covid-19 amongst our children/students and staff may also impact our ability to reopen the school. **Therefore it is important to understand that the plans set out in this letter may be subject to change.**

There are also some key aspects of school reopening which I want to bring to your attention so that you can make an informed decision about your child returning to school:

- Whilst we will take all measures possible to ensure social distancing, it must be acknowledged that we will not be able to guarantee social distancing at all times
- The physical limitations of our classrooms mean that we will not be able to operate groups of 15 children in all cases, and children will be in smaller groups. Children will always remain in these small groups.
- Your child may not be with their usual teacher
- Classroom layout will be different to support social distancing, with set desks; this will be particularly different for younger children who are used to free flow play
- Curriculum will be different as paired and group work will not be possible
- Children may see staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where this is required to deal with medical or sickness situations

- The use of education resources will be restricted and will need to be cleaned more regularly

To allow for the preparation of classrooms and resources, and for staff training we will be closing the school on Monday 1 and Tuesday 2 June to all children, including children of key workers and vulnerable children

Having carefully considered all the aspects above, we will be reopening the school for the following year group from **3rd June: Year 1**; **On 8<sup>th</sup> June, Year 6** will return to school; **On 15<sup>th</sup> June Reception** class and on **22<sup>nd</sup> June** the **3-4 year olds** in **Nursery**. All parents of nursery age children in this age group will be written to with an offer of days on which they can attend school. We will review the position in school and decide whether we have the capacity to safely welcome back the younger nursery children.

The school will not be open to children on Fridays, except the vulnerable children and the children of key workers. This is so that we can provide the teachers with time to plan the learning that will take place in class and online. It also enables us to have the school deep cleaned each week.

If a child attends the vulnerable / keyworker children group after half term, they will not be allowed to return to their class group. Similarly, if a key worker / vulnerable child joins their class, they will not be allowed to re-join the keyworker/ vulnerable group. This is so that we can follow the government advice of not allowing groups or bubbles of children to mix. All GLF schools are currently following this protocol. We are going to be constantly reviewing

If your child has medical condition which deems them to be critically vulnerable, or if another member of your household is critically vulnerable then your child should remain at home and not return to school.

We will continue to offer provision for our key worker families and for our vulnerable children in all year groups. These children will be kept as a separate group and will not integrate with their class group.

During the initial phases of opening we will have sufficient teacher capacity to continue the high quality online learning that the teachers have been working to provide. As the school takes in more children the school may have less capacity to engage online, but we will ensure that the children continue to get the best possible online learning experiences.

Government advice currently advises us to avoid using public transport to travel to school and that wherever possible, you should travel (to school) either by walking or cycling whenever possible. It is imperative that you do not drive to school as this will cause congestion and inevitably social distancing problems.

The school has staggered arrival and collection times. It is extremely important that everyone follows these guidelines. Only one person should come to school to drop off a child or children.

When it is your turn to drop off, there is a red line which adults must not go beyond – the children will go in alone from this point. The parent must then leave school grounds by the designated route. Please see separate map. Unfortunately, the teachers will not have time to engage in conversation as there will be other parents who need to drop their children off on time. If your

child refuses to leave or is upset, you will need to take them off site with you and either try again later or return the following day.

The **Alley way** and the **Bridge gates** must be used for **entry** to school **only**.

All parents are asked to leave via the main entrance road. Parents may also walk in this way. All adults and children must stay on the left hand side. **ASOLUTELY NO VEHICLES WILL BE ALLOWED DOWN THIS ROAD AT DROP OFF OR PICK UP TIMES.** Please do not bring siblings to school, unless unavoidable. All play equipment in the school playground is closed and must not be used.

DROP OFF		PICK UP	
8.50-9.00	Vulnerable / KeyW + Year 6	2.25-2.40	Nursery
9.05-9.20	Reception	2.40-2.55	Year 1
9.25-9.45	Year 1	3.00-3.15	Reception
9.50-10.10	Nursery	3.15-3.30	Vulnerable / KeyW + Year 6

**It is imperative that all adults leave the school site as soon as they have dropped off. Please do not gather at the gates as other year groups will be arriving and we need to maintain social distancing rules.**

Children in the infants will be given a packed lunch by the school. Initially no hot meals will be served at school. Your child may wish to bring a packed lunch in form home. Lunch times will be staggered and children will have their lunch in their classroom or if weather permits outside. Children will only be allowed to play within their class group of maximum 15 children and they will need to socially distance.

The school will be maintain its hygiene practices and the children will be washing their hands immediately upon arrival and then regularly during the day, at playtime, lunchtime and after going outside/ to the toilet.

Children are expected to wear the normal school uniform. It is probably good practice to wash this as soon as your child arrives home.

For the foreseeable future there will not be a breakfast or after school club.

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and staff. The school will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and will continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19. Additional health and safety protocols have been established and all members of the school community are expected to adhere to these. The school will adopt a risk assessment approach for anyone who forgets or does not adopt our safety protocols with age appropriate sanctions where necessary.

Should a child develop symptoms of Covid19 they will be taken to an isolated room where they will be looked after by a member of staff who will be wearing full PPE. You will be contacted and asked to collect your child immediately. **IT IS THEREFORE IMPERATIVE THAT YOU ENSURE**

THAT WE HAVE THE MOST UP TO DATE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS.

Normally we have a number of visitors to the office. Only one person will be allowed into the office reception area at a time. Please only come in to the office if absolutely necessary. Ideally communication should be via email to [info@mersthamprimaryschool.org](mailto:info@mersthamprimaryschool.org) or by calling the school on 017373 643978. Please note that we do have a limited number of staff and your email may not be answered as quickly as usual, in addition we have limited telephone capacity but we will do all we can to answer your calls.

Where a 'face to face' meeting is required, meetings will take place observing social distancing rules. All such meetings will need to be booked in advance via email / telephone with the office. These meetings will take place as soon as possible.

We will continue to provide FSM vouchers for those eligible children not in school. If your child is in a year group which is returning to school, but remains at home, then we will only be able to provide vouchers retrospectively once we know that you child has not attended for that week.

Further general information and guidance for parents and carers regarding coronavirus is available here: <http://www.glfschools.org/1168/coronavirus-covid-19>.

Finally, I would like to clarify that the government has stated that there will be no penalties for parents and carers should they decide to keep their children at home.

I apologise if some of what is in the letter is 'dictatorial', however I have to ensure that everyone follows the guidance that we are issuing in order that we protect every member of our community. This is a challenging, unprecedented and ever changing situation and the team at Merstham will do all we can to keep you well informed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, in advance, for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely



**Gavin Oulton**  
**Headteacher Merstham Primary School**