

# Bessemer Primary School

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**Executive Headteacher:** Ms Sarah Beard

**Head of School:** Mrs Elizabeth Whitehead



Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will be aware the government has decided that schools will reopen for selected year groups (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6) from June 1<sup>st</sup>. While this decision may still change and reopening may be pushed back, we are continuing to plan for a return to school during the week beginning Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June.

While we are all very keen to get back to providing education, our primary concern at this point is ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the children. We have carried out an extensive risk assessment in consultation with the rest of the leadership team, the whole school staff and the Local Authority. We have done our best to address every risk we can think of, but I feel it is only fair to be clear that we can offer no guarantees and cannot claim to be able to completely eradicate the risk of infection.

On Monday we will add the full risk assessment to the school website, it will be on the front page under 'School Reopening'. In the meantime I would like to share some key changes that we will be implementing as I think this will give you an idea of what school will look like and will help you to decide whether or not you want to send your children back.

- We will be closed to children on June 1<sup>st</sup> as we are having an Inset day to ensure all staff have had training based around the risk assessment.
- Year 6, Year 1 and Nursery, including Little Stars, will start on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June.
- If all goes well then Reception children will return on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June.
- We will have staggered drop off and pick up times to reduce the number of people arriving at school at the same time.
- Each year group that is returning will enter school via a different gate.
- No parents or other non-school-based adults will be allowed onto the school grounds. All children will be dropped off at their gates. We ask that each child is dropped off by one adult and that they queue two metres apart at the gate to wait to come in.
- All children must wash their hands on arrival at school. Handwashing will then be timetabled throughout the day.
- In Year 6 and Year 1, classes will be split so that children are in groups, which we will call pods, of no more than 15. Children will stay with their pod for learning, playtime and eating so they only mix with those children to reduce the potential spread of infection. Pods will have contact with the same teachers, teaching assistants and meal supervisors every day.
- In Year 6 and Year 1 tables will be arranged so that children sit two metres apart. They will have their own set of resources on their tables so that they do not need to move around the room or share resources. If the weather permits we will also use courtyards to provide additional learning space.

- In Early Years there will be no more than 15 children in a pod, however we do not have space to split classes so if more children than this allows for wish to return we may have to offer places by using a selection process.
- Early Years children will not have whole group carpet times so that children are not asked to sit too close together.
- Early Years children will have use of their own playground and the KS1 playground to ensure they have plenty of outdoor space. Numbers of children playing inside and outside will be closely monitored.
- Both indoors and outdoors, resources will be limited to allow for regular cleaning. All soft toys and furnishings will be removed from the classrooms.
- As much time as possible will be spent outside. Afternoons will be spent doing P.E. and playing or learning outside as far as is possible. When inside, windows will be open as long as the weather allows.
- Toilet areas, door handles, bannisters etc will be cleaned regularly throughout the day.
- All adults will practise social distancing and will remind children to do so too. Children will not be told off for a lack of social distancing but will be reminded regularly and kindly. Staff will be careful about the language they use around social distancing to avoid distressing children. Children in Little Stars will not be expected to understand or practise social distancing but routines will be changed to encourage distancing if appropriate.
- Corridors have been marked with single direction walking lanes and arrows two metres apart to help children with social distancing. Numbers of children in toilet areas will be limited to ensure children remain two metres apart.
- There will be no assemblies in the hall and we will not be using the lunch hall. Cold lunches will be provided by the kitchen and delivered to children in their classrooms.
- There will not be any breakfast club and After School Club will be for key workers' children and vulnerable children only.
- Children will not be allowed to bring in anything from home except a water bottle which must be clearly labelled and which will be kept on their table, and a mobile phone if needed for Year 6 only. Phones will not be handed in but must be turned off and kept in the tray on the child's table. Children should not bring book bags to school as reading books will not be sent backwards and forwards.
- Where staff cannot maintain distance from a child, e.g. when changing nappies in Little Stars or administering first aid, they may wear masks and will wear gloves.
- We will be reviewing and evaluating our arrangements constantly and will make changes as needed. This may include reducing the number of children in school if necessary.

As you can see, school is going to be a very different place for a while; however we hope that we can still make it a pleasant environment for the children. We will be teaching maths and English every morning but at this time we do not plan to teach the wider curriculum so the afternoons will be more relaxed with plenty of time for P.E. and creativity.

As the teachers of the year groups that are returning will now be teaching in school every day, they will not be able to continue to provide the same level of home learning on Google Classroom, however they will upload the power points / Smart notebooks and work that they are doing in class for any children who continue to learn from home. For children who are returning, teachers of these year groups will be posting videos explaining some of the changes that can be expected on Google Classroom for the children to watch.

Year groups that are not returning will continue to be provided with daily lessons on Google Classroom.

Following requests from parents we are adding some lesson plans for the wider curriculum to our website. These will be under 'Home Learning' and then 'Wider Curriculum' and will be available from Monday. You can also use the BBC Bitesize links to access lessons for the wider curriculum if you wish to do so. There is no expectation that you are teaching any of the wider curriculum at home however, all of this learning will be covered when we all return to school.

I hope that this information is helpful and enables you to make a decision about whether to send your child(ren) back to school. I want to emphasise that this is entirely your decision and one that you need to feel happy with, there are no penalties for not sending your child back and we support your decision either way.

Please could you let us know by Wednesday of next week whether or not your child will be returning as we need to plan for definite numbers. If you decide not to send your child back and change your mind later that is fine, we will just need a couple of days' notice to accommodate them.

I hope that this letter and the risk assessment will provide all of the information you need, but please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Have a lovely weekend and thank you for your ongoing support.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth Whitehead