



Loving, Learning, Living

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope that this letter finds you safe and well.

Following the Government's announcement that schools should plan for phased reopening from 1st June 2020, we would like to share with you the arrangements we are implementing to facilitate the proposed return of pupils, staff and visitors to the school.

We would like to reassure you that the safety of our school community is our priority. Therefore, in preparation for possible wider reopening, we have followed all current guidance contained in the Government publication [Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020](#) and have carried out thorough risk assessments to identify and minimise the risks associated with COVID-19 specific to our school.

As we are sure you will appreciate, guidance and information is changing on an almost daily basis. We will therefore continue to review the plans and risk assessments and update you with any changes as and when we make them.

An update from the Government on whether wider reopening can begin is not expected until Thursday 28th May. If this direction is received, we have plans in place to allow us to begin a phased reopening after half term.

Planned Phased Return:

- Week beginning 1st June 2020
 - school will continue to be open to all children of key workers and those identified as vulnerable
- Week beginning 8th June 2020
 - school will also be open to children in Nursery and Reception
- Week beginning 15th June 2020
 - school will also be open to children in Year 1 and Year 6

Arrangements for each group or 'pod' ,are planned to be:

All pods will be no more than 15 pupils and depending on the size of room, sometimes fewer. Once children are attending a 'pod' they will remain in that group. Ratios of staff to pupils in Nursery/Reception will be 1:8 and in all other 'pods' 1:15.

- Children of key workers and those identified as vulnerable (Yrs 2345) : Mrs Paisley
- Nursery and Reception : Mrs Pounder and Mrs Murray
- Year 1 : Mr Pearson
- Year 6 : Ms Leithead
- All groups will be supported by our Teaching Assistants as required.

In the event that a teacher is unavailable for work, teaching assistants, in line with government guidance, will then lead groups.

Once capacity is reached in each 'pod' we have reserved the hall as space for overflow provision.

Our limited space means that in order to follow current guidelines we calculate our total capacity to be a maximum of 69 pupils per day. However, children will not move between 'pods' in response to changes in demand for provision as contact between children must be minimised.

Maintaining infection control in school

As per the advice from the government, the following actions for infection control will be in place:

The school will be implement guidance as detailed in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)

To ensure the risk of transmission of infection is substantially reduced when the school reopens, we will implement the following controls:

- Children to be grouped in cohort 'zones' to facilitate minimum possible contact between them and other pupils attending school in different zones
- Class sizes to be halved, and classrooms rearranged to ensure seating positions are two metres apart
- The Policy for Good behaviour to be updated to account for the social distancing rules in each 'pod' and other expectations of pupils. Pupils and their parents will be informed about the changes to the Policy for Good Behaviour ahead of their return to school
- Whole school and Zone specific risk assessments to reflect the different requirements of each age group
- Contact with individuals who are unwell to be minimised by ensuring that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who live with someone who does, do not attend school
- Regular and frequent washing of hands to be encouraged, ensuring everyone cleanses their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds using soap or by the use of an alcohol-based sanitiser
- Good respiratory hygiene to be reinforced and posters displayed to promote the steps that should be taken
- Cleaning of regularly touched surfaces and equipment to be carried out frequently

- Contact and mixing of pupils to be minimised by alterations to the school environment, including classroom layouts, limits on the number of pupils who use toilet facilities at any time, staggered timetables and changes to the way pupils move around school.
- Parents are required not to enter school buildings or to gather at the school gates

We would ask that you continue to encourage good infection control practices, such as thorough handwashing, at home and keep your child informed about the things they can do to discourage the spread of infection.

As per the current NHS and government advice, you should keep your child at home for a period of 14 days if they develop coronavirus symptoms. Symptoms include a high temperature or a new, continuous cough. Where symptoms continue after 7 days, or begin to worsen, you should call 111. If someone in your child's household has symptoms, your child must self-isolate for 14 days from the day the other person's symptoms started. This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear. More information regarding symptoms and actions can be found on the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>).

If you think your child may have been exposed to or has coronavirus, please inform the school at the earliest opportunity.

Current advice is that all staff and pupils over the age of 5, will have access to testing if they develop symptoms of coronavirus and rapid action will be taken should any test come back positive. The affected pupil or member of staff will be required to self-isolate at home for 14 days, as will any pupils and members of staff they have been in close contact with (ie the rest of the pupil's 'pod').

PPE

We have also considered the use of PPE and the government guidance is clear that face masks are not recommended for staff or pupils attending school. However, we will have appropriate PPE available in the event of anyone showing symptoms or if children require medical attention.

School uniform

- Clothes should be 'clean on' and washed or changed for the start of every day
- Wearing of the school uniform is not necessary but all clothes should be suitable for outdoor activity and the weather conditions. School will not be able to provide our normal outdoor clothing at this time
- Pupils who arrive in dirty or unwashed clothes will be sent home to change
- PE Kit is not required

Arrangements for the start and end of the school day

The beginning and end of the school day are the busiest times for children and adults congregating together in one place, so we plan to implement the following measures when pupils return to school:

- The timings for dropping off and picking up pupils will be staggered for each 'pod' as follows:
 - **Children of Keyworkers & Vulnerable Children**: 9.00am & 2.00pm

- <u>Nursery & Reception</u> :	9.15am & 2.15pm
- <u>Year 1</u> :	9.30am & 2.30pm
- <u>Year 6</u> :	9.45am & 2.45pm

- Pupils will enter and leave the school through their designated zone's entrance which will be clearly marked
- A marked one-way system will be set up in the school grounds to minimise face-to-face contact between parents and pupils entering and leaving school to make it easier to follow social distancing guidance
- From 3pm every day school will be emptied to allow for deep cleaning. We have employed additional staff and have developed an enhanced cleaning schedule that will be implemented as and when the school reopens to more pupils and staff to ensure increased infection control

Arrangements for break times and lunchtimes

We recognise the importance for all pupils to enjoy access to learning and playtime outside during the school day. All pupils will be given the opportunity to access school grounds throughout the day. However, they will remain separate from other groups at all times.

The school kitchen will provide packed lunches to all pupils who request a school lunch. Children will take lunch in their zones with a teacher presence at all times.

The school day

Specific details of the arrangements for the school day and any changes made to the classrooms will be shared with you prior to the planned reopening for each cohort. These will be in a child friendly format so that you can prepare yourselves and your children for how different school will look and feel on their return. Inevitably, this will be different to what you and they remember, as although we will do our very best to make school as welcoming a place as possible, the current circumstances do not allow us to provide the same environment as before.

Curriculum

Learning will continue to be designed to be accessible for all pupils, whether they are in school or at home. Teachers will continue to use our high quality online resources as detailed on google classroom and on the curriculum tab of our website for all children. This will ensure we are providing essential learning to all pupils whether in school or at home and allow us to maintain equity of curriculum provision to all.

Transition arrangements

This time of year is especially important for our Year 6 pupils, who are preparing to move to the next stage of their education. Even in normal circumstances, this can be a worrying time for children, and for some, the recent time away from school may have magnified their worries. To help all pupils prepare for this change and to make the move to their next school successful, we would like to hear from them about what they are looking forward to and any concerns they have – this will inform our plans for supporting pupils transitioning to their new school. A Pupil Transition Questionnaire will be sent to all Yr

6 pupils via email and we will of course contact you directly to discuss in detail the plans for transition to The Duchess's High School.

Support for pupils and families

We do not underestimate how difficult the recent weeks have been for us all and we all will have been touched in some way by the coronavirus pandemic. We recognise the need to focus on pupils' emotional wellbeing as well as their return to learning, especially as some pupils may not have had face-to-face interaction with their peers for a long time. Some of you may have concerns about your child returning to school and that another change will be unsettling for some children. We also understand that the past weeks will have been challenging for many families and therefore the focus on our return to school will be pupil wellbeing.

If you would like to talk to us about your child and any concerns you have about their return to school, in the first instance, please complete the google form contained in the email that this letter was attached to. We will then respond to your questions directly or if appropriate in the form of a Frequently Asked Questions document. In the event a large volume of queries we will prioritise our response to them in the following order:

1. Children of key workers and those identified as vulnerable
2. Nursery and Reception
3. Year 1 and Year 6

We know you will be understanding of our need to make adjustments to school provision in order to meet the necessarily strict guidelines on infection control and social distancing. We hope that these arrangements provide you with the information you need to make your decision around whether you intend for your child to return to school. We would also encourage you to read the Government guidance for parents and carers which you can access [here](#).

If your child is eligible for one of the identified 'pods' then please indicate your intentions should school be in the position to begin wider reopening as described. There is a Google form for this purpose - also sent with this letter.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank you for supporting the school over recent weeks and we are all very much looking forward to seeing some of the children again. We would like to reassure you that we are doing all we can to prepare for the wider re-opening of our school and will continue to support those children still learning at home. As always, we will place the best interests of pupils, their families and our staff at the heart of all our decisions in the coming days and weeks.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Connolly
Headteacher

Rachel Murphy
Chair of Governors