

BERKELEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Friday 15th May 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

On Sunday, the Prime Minister announced the Government's 'Road Map' which identifies steps in how they will attempt to bring the country out of lockdown. Currently we are in Step 1, with a projection for the country to reach Step 2 by June 1st. Step 2 relates to primary schools opening for certain year groups: **YR, Y1 & Y6**.

Since the announcement, the school, Governors and the Trust have taken on board the government's guidelines and have provisionally set out a plan (subject to change based on daily updates from the government) for the possible return of these year groups, whilst continuing to provide provision for critical Key Worker children and remote learning for other children. This, as you can imagine, has to be carefully thought out and also reviewed daily, as the guidance we receive is adapted based on scientific evidence. The school does not have the capacity to open our Nursery (Little Jesters) as early as June 1st based on the current government guidelines.

It is a very unsettling time for us all, but please rest assured that we are going to be doing everything we can to make sure we are ready to receive these year groups, as long as it safe for children, staff and parents. Safety and wellbeing of our children and staff is our **main focus** and will always be our top priority at BPS.

Safety Measures

The government's guidelines stipulate that precautionary measures need to be in place to minimise risk and ensure the safety of the children and staff in school. These are as follows:

- Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- Thorough & regular hand washing
- Ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'Catch it. Bin it. Kill It' approach.
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces using detergents and antibacterial products.
- Minimising contact and mixing by alternating, as much as possible by adapting classroom layouts, groups of children and timetables e.g. staggered timetables
- Social distancing in small groups wherever possible

Berkeley Primary School, part of Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust, registered in England and Wales no. 7692339, registered office Cainscross Road, Stroud, GL5 4HE



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- The government has not stated that children need to wear face masks in school. However, the school will support any parent's decision who feels that they would like their child to wear a face mask during lessons. Staff have been given the option of wearing facemasks, and we have commissioned some rainbow masks to be made in order for them to be as child-friendly as possible.

SURVEY:

We sent out an initial survey on the uptake of provision for **Reception, Y1 and Y6** on Monday 12th May to help us plan and ensure we had capacity. Thank you for your responses. We have based our planning on these results. Many of you said that you would decide upon hearing how this will look in practice for your children. Therefore, below is an outline of the main points, based on government guidelines, with all the varying factors we must consider; all of which are to ensure the safety of children and staff. We understand that this is a very personal choice at this time, but would ask you please to complete the attached survey once you have made your final decision in order for us to compile registers, and if necessary, reassess our plans based on the number of children attending. Please only complete this survey if your children are in one or more of the named year groups.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/89HHTDP>

Please complete this survey by 10am Monday 18th May 2020.

The government has stated that 'Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time, and schools and colleges will not be held to account for attendance levels.' Once we know final numbers, we will adjust our planning accordingly and send further information around the organisation of the school day, including timings, uniform and catering provision.

How will the phased return look for my child in Reception, Y1 and Y6?

One of the major changes the school is making under the new government's guidelines is to place children in groups/bubbles rather than classes. Due to the classroom sizes at Berkeley, these bubbles will have a maximum of 7 children in each bubble and they will not mix with children in other bubbles during their time in school. Each bubble will be given a time to come to school and a collection time at the end of the school day, as well as having allocated break times and lunch time sessions, effectively staggering the flow of children around the school to minimise the risk. Teachers have been tasked with creating groups of children into known friendship bubbles in preparation. Further details to follow.

The bubbles, including the key worker provision bubbles, will be taught/cared for by either teachers or teaching assistants. This will very much depend on staffing numbers currently available to work in the school which may also change on a daily basis. Each year group will be assigned a teaching team. This teaching team will only have contact with their bubbles, and teams will consist of 1 member of staff in each bubble (this might be more depending on the needs of the children). The children will not necessarily be with their class teacher, but will be with familiar staff based on their age group. This will continue until further notice.

The school will be asking parents and children to adhere to the 2m social distancing rule (where possible) hence why the school will also put in place staggered times for dropping off and collecting children from school as noted above. These will be based around standard school



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opening and closing times. We will also expect parents and children to follow the one-way system for both entering and leaving the premises. We plan to send out a video this weekend of what the classrooms and outdoor spaces will look like, so that you can share these with your children, talking them through the temporary changes. Wherever possible, we are making changes as child-friendly as we can, so as not to alarm the children, however the classrooms look very different to what they are used to. I cannot stress enough that based on the guidelines we have been given as schools, we cannot return to normal practice on June 1st.

The Rest of the School

Should Step 2 go according to plan, there are plans from the government to ensure that all children will have some form of return to school (a month before the school officially breaks up for the summer holidays). If this goes ahead and social distancing measures are still in place, then the school will amend our plans accordingly.

For all the children attending the school during these unprecedented times, we will be delivering an enriched curriculum that focusses on the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils alongside activities that still cover Maths, English and Physical Education: The latter will mirror the work being sent to the children learning at home.

Children that are at home will still be provided with learning from their class teacher, but the teacher may not be 'Live' every day if they are working in school with other children. If this is the case, you will be notified through Marvellous Me (MME) of the availability of their teacher. They will of course ensure that there is plenty of work for children.

In the meantime, the school remains open only for vulnerable pupils and the children of critical keyworkers previously identified. If you work in a school or childcare setting, and are returning to work on June 1st, you will be able to apply for provision by emailing frontline@berkeley.gloucs.sch.uk and you will be sent a keyworker assessment form to complete and return. However, due to capacity, we may or may not be able to provide this provision based on numbers already in school. We currently plan provision on a fortnightly basis.

We would like to thank you for your continuous support in helping your child learn from home. We know how hard it is, as we are all trying to do the same, and it hasn't been easy. Your support, positivity and encouragement is appreciated now more than ever, and we thank you all. We will need to keep going with this for a while yet, so please do continue to do what you can and stay in touch with your child's class teacher via the methods advised. There will be further information and updates circulated to parents in the coming weeks. At the time of writing this, further guidance has been published and is under review, with more information being sent on Monday 18th May. As schools, we receive the same information as the general public, but must then adapt this for our setting.

With many thanks for your ongoing support and understanding during this time,



Miss Robbins and the Governors of Berkeley Primary school.



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