



ALL SAINTS BENHILTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

All Saints Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3DA.

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Headteacher: Karen Stanley-Bristowe

'Life in all its fullness' brings joys and challenges, good times and bad times, happy times and sad times'. John 10:10

Dear Parents/ Carers,

18th May 2020

Thank you for working so hard with your children to keep them engaged in learning. We really are thinking of you during this stressful time and hope you are all looking after yourselves. As many of you will be aware, the government have announced that schools should be planning to make a return to school for key groups of children from June 1st 2020. Last week, much guidance was produced on a daily basis and as every changing just as quickly. Today myself, senior leaders and governors met to carry out a robust risk assessment based on these guidelines. This is an update of where we are with our planning for a safe return to school.

Return to School Plans – Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

We have been working hard to find a way of creating a safe return to school as soon as possible after half-term. It is a challenging task as we need to adjust our plans as we receive advice from the Department for Education and the Local Authority. Contrary to media reports, school staff can't wait to see the children again. Being with the children is joyful - they are the reason we get up in the morning. We miss seeing their faces, watching them smiling and playing, learning intently or seeking help, knowing that we're there for them. However, I have the difficult task of ensuring that, when the children return, it is safe to do so. While research does indicate that most children do not appear to get terribly sick with the virus, I feel a huge weight of responsibility to ensure that we reduce the risk of spreading the virus through children, staff, families and the wider community.

School will look different for our returning children and we need to be sensitive to prepare them for what that might look like so that any return is a positive return. We have reviewed how we can:

- accommodate children safely through social distancing in rooms that are designed for 30 children in close proximity
- allocate adults to lead split classes, across several rooms
- consider integration of key worker children to avoid cross-contamination
- limit to the number of resources, pens, pencils, small world toys, to avoid spread of the virus

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- adapt the curriculum to allow for split groups
- manage break times and lunchtimes without groups overlapping
- ensure safe movement around the school
- support safe practices of handwashing and social distancing
- give teaching staff a lunchbreak
- clean thoroughly and regularly through the day and acquire cleaning products to do so
- safely drop off and pick up children at school
- maintain home learning for all other year groups.

For our very youngest children, Nursery, Reception and Year 1, the Government guidelines acknowledge that social distancing is hard to achieve. We would agree that trying to prevent children seeking physical comfort or enforcing boundaries from their friends would be detrimental to their experience of school. We are looking at how we can divide the children into small groups led by consistent adults to minimise the level of mixing. This means if there is evidence of the virus, it is contained to a smaller group of children and less adults so, whilst not ideal, it is at least managed.

As I said earlier, this is an on-going process and we will review our risk assessment on a weekly basis. This will be uploaded to the website for your perusal. A key part of whether schools return, depends on whether the Government's five tests of safety are met and notification of this may come as late as 29th May, which is the Friday of the half-term break.

Therefore, with all this to consider, it has been decided that **Nursery will not be returning to school on the 1st June** and will continue with online learning. It is planned for **Year Six** to return to school on **Monday 8th June** following a review of the risk assessment at the end of the first week.

On Monday 1st June Reception and Year One children will return to school. There will be a phased start time and again at the end of the day to reduce the number of parents congregating at one time. You will be allocated a pickup/ drop-off time and a location. School will operate on a Monday through to Friday but will be closing a 1pm on a Friday for staff to plan for the following week. This is because they can't be released from class as they would normally do as it increases the number of adults in contact with the children. Each class will be split into groups of 15 children and you will be notified later in the week as to the group your child is in.

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The remainder of the school will continue with online learning for the time being albeit a reduced level due to the majority of available staff now returning to school to teach a small group of children.

I am sure that some of you will be anxious about the return to school and, with the best will in the world, social distancing of small children is extremely difficult to maintain. I respect that each one of you will need to come to your own decision about returning to school. If you are not going to send your child to school then you will need to inform the school office immediately. Unless there is a medical reason why a member of your household needs to self-isolate, then we will **not** be able to provide online learning.

No Home Learning on Friday 22nd May

There is an INSET day planned for Friday 22nd May, the Friday before the half-term. As such, we will not be uploading learning for that day, or the half-term period, to allow staff to prepare for the return to classroom teaching and to plan for the next half-term. The senior leadership team and office staff will be available if you have any queries on that day through the office email address.

Those that have children in **Reception and Year One**, you will be sent further information later in the week, however it is important that we start to prepare the children and talk to them about the return to school and some of the differences they will encounter. The key worker children will continue in the same way that they have for the past nine weeks and we ask that you continue to send in your request for a place as soon as you have your next shift pattern.

I am immensely proud of how our teaching staff have stepped up to create lessons through Google Classroom and adapted how they are teaching your children remotely, based on conversations with parents/carers and the children themselves. All school staff have willingly put themselves forward on the rota to look after the key worker and vulnerable children and we have lots of volunteers to do so even during the Easter break. We are committed to doing the best we can for your children during this time and are here to support you if you need any help.

Stay safe and well.

God Bless,

Best wishes,

Mrs Stanley-Bristowe

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