LONG MEADOW SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mr Philip Gray BEd (Hons) CANTAB, NPQH

Friday May 22 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Well the end of the most unusual half term in my whole career has come to an end. Our plans for the proposed reopening are in full flow now, with the finishing touches to the school site being completed whilst we are shut to all children over the half term break.

Thank you to all the parents that completed the form if they are choosing to send their children back. This closed at 12.00pm today. Please also ensure you have completed a form for each child. You will find some extra information below, that if we do open, should help ease you into the way the school will be operating. Please remember, this will not be the school which you remember in looks and in how it will run.

Please remember the school will be open all week but close on Friday lunchtimes. Drop off and pick up times are as follows:

**EYFS**

Arrive at 9.15am

Collected at 2.45pm (Fridays at 11.45am)

**Yr1**

Arrive at 9.00am

Collected at 3.00pm (Fridays at 12.00pm)

**Y6**

Arrive at 8.45am

Collected at 3.15pm (Fridays at 12.15pm)

C**hildren of Critical Workers and Vulnerable children not in these year groups**

Arrive at 9.15am

Collected at 2.45pm

Now the form has closed, we will begin the process of putting the children into groups across the school and allocating staff to these groups. Once this has been completed, we will contact parents with details. We will send these out as soon as we have them, alongside hopefully what classrooms may look like during this period. I warn you now, they will be very different to the warm, nurturing rooms that we pride ourselves on at LMS.

We know there is a lot of information in the following pages, but we wanted to try and answer as many questions as possible in one go. As ever, if you have any further questions, please use...

emergency@longmeadow.milton-keynes.sch.uk

...and not the school office email, as this will only delay a response.

Best wishes

Mr Gray

HeadTeacher

**Why is the school closed on Friday afternoons?**

This time each week will allow staff to plan and prepare both for learning in school but also on Google classroom. It will also allow a deep clean of the site, and then an extended period over the weekend so the school can start the next week as safe as possible.

**Will my child be in a group with their friends and children from their class?**

This will very much depend on numbers and who wishes to return. We will do our best to make sure children feel supported, but they may be with children not in their friendship group or even in their own class. Once bubbles are created these will not be changed. The likelihood is that your child will also not be with their previous class teacher.

**Where do I take my child in the mornings?**

All children and parents will enter through the staff car park gates, you will then need to follow the one way system around the school to find the letter of the classroom you will have been given: they are in alphabetical order. When there you will need to drop your child off and re-enter the one way system to the exit at the main gate. Please adhere to 2m social distancing at all times; if there are people in front of you, please use the markings to help you keep your distance. Please do not stop at any point to chat with other parents as this will cause a queue and will not allow safe social distancing.

**What time do I drop my child off?**

To ensure safe social distancing, we have staggered the start and finish times. The site is closed to parents until their allocated drop off time. There is to be no stopping, congregating or socialising on or around the school site please. If you have children in different year groups, please drop off all of your children at the earliest slot you have been allocated. This also applies to pick up times.

**What if my child resists going in?**

Unfortunately, staff can only verbally encourage your child to come in. If your child does find it difficult please continue back into the one way system, do a lap of the school and come back once more children have gone in, then staff will be able to verbally support you. Unfortunately, we cannot have parents stopping with children within the system. Going around again will allow us to give the time to support you and your child.

**Can I go into the classroom or speak to the teacher?**

No. Unfortunately this is not possible whilst we are under these conditions. Parents are not allowed into the school building without an appointment. If you wish to leave a message for the teacher, please do this through the school office. We hope to share pictures of what a typical classroom will look like once these are fully set up over half term.

**Where do I pick my child up?**

The same routine will apply to pick up as drop off. Please use the one way system. Your children should be ready for you to collect and exit immediately. Please ensure conversations with your child are done on the move in the one way system or once you are off the school site. Some pickups will need to be a ‘pick up and go’ whereas some may require you to use a social distancing ‘cone’ or ‘spot’ on the playground whilst you wait for your child. Staff will be on hand to support you.

**What will my child do for lunch?**

For children in EYFS, Year 1 and those eligible for Free School meals in Year 6, parents can order a packed lunch from our caterers. Unfortunately, at the moment we cannot offer this to other Year 6 children as we have no means for this to be paid. Children of course may also bring their own packed lunch from home. Parents should have received an email from the office regarding this already.

**What if we are late to school?**

If you are late for your allocated arrival time, you will need to ring the buzzer on the main gate, and the office will let you in. You will then need to follow the one way system around the school to your child's designated classroom. Please knock on the window of their room and do not enter the building. Please then continue around the building so you can be buzzed out to exit.

**What does my child need to wear?**

Your child does not have to wear school uniform. We believe this will allow children to come to school each day in a set of freshly washed clothes. This again reduces the risk of transmission from day to day. If we asked them to wear uniforms, this would not always be possible. We also don't want anyone to have to buy anything new!

**Can my child bring in healthy snacks and drinks?**

Your child can bring in a healthy snack as they did before we were shut. There is no change there.

**What if my child hurts themselves during the day?**

If your child hurts themselves and requires basic first aid, this will be dealt with in the bubble. Staff may wear extra PPE for this to allow them to support your child in the best way. If your child requires more than basic first aid, they will be dealt with by a trained adult who will require PPE due them being outside of the child's bubble. You will then receive a text to say they have received first aid, as we will not be sending slips home.

**Do they need to wear a mask?**

No, your child does not need to wear a mask, as per government guidelines. However, if you choose to send your child to school in a mask they will not be asked to remove it. Children must be able to take off masks and reinstate them themselves. School staff are unable to assist them with this.

**Will staff be wearing masks?**

As a school we are not making staff wear masks, however some staff may choose to wear them and they will not be asked to remove them. Staff may also wear PPE at various times to be able to support the children of the school safely.

**Do they need to bring in their own pencil case and equipment?**

No, all the equipment your child will need will be provided at school. This means they will not be sharing equipment, thus reducing the risk of transference. This will then also stay in school and not come home.

**Will they be playing with toys/ books?**

Unfortunately, anything which is hard to clean will have to be removed from the classrooms before the 1st June. This means books will not be coming home with the children. Toys that are out will be basic, minimal and able to be cleaned. This means school will continue to look and be very different.

**Are staff allowed to comfort children if they are sad or hurt?**

We will be practising social distancing as much as we possibly can, but parents must recognise that this isn't always possible and this is reflected in the government guidance. Parents must also respect the decisions of staff, who also have loved ones and families at home, who do not wish to break social distancing. However, the safeguarding of children will ALWAYS be our first priority, even above social distancing

**What happens if they need the toilet?**

Children will be able to go to the toilet as frequently as they need. They will however be encouraged to go at key times and will go on their own. Toilets will be shared by bubbles, but staff will be positioned to ensure children from bubbles are not in the toilets at the same time. Toilet flushers, door handles and taps will be cleaned hourly by site staff.

**Will they be playing on the outside equipment?**

No, due to us not being able to ensure that the equipment is cleaned properly, all outside play equipment, including the Pirate ship, trim trails and table tennis tables will be out of use. These will be more ‘fresh air breaks' rather than the traditional play and lunch times.

**Will they be washing their hands regularly/ using antibac?**

Yes as a school we have identified key wash points throughout the day as a minimum (see attached poster). However children will be encouraged to wash them regularly and antibac foam will be available for classrooms. Children will also be able to bring in hand cream for their own use (not to be shared) to counteract the dryness that occurs from this, if parents wish.

**How will the school get pupils to remain two meters from each other?**

As we have stated from the very start, everything we do will be to reduce any risk. Measures in place to keep children apart include

* Small group sizes
* Individual desks/carpet spaces 2m apart
* Staggered start, finish, break and lunchtimes
* Constant positive reminders of social distancing

However, we cannot guarantee that the 2m distance will happen all day every day, due to the nature of children being children, particularly with EYFS.

**If children forget to socially distance at school, will they be told off?**

No. Children will be reminded positively about social distancing if they forget. However, children who do not follow instructions and break socially distinct guidelines frequently on purpose, may have their parents called for them to be collected to ensure we can keep them and the rest of the community safe.

**Will the schools be allowed to close if there is an outbreak of the virus or will staff or children need to self-isolate?**

If there is a confirmed case for a child or staff member, the whole of that bubble will be required to self -isolate for 14 days.

**Will you be taking children's temperatures during the day?**

No, not routinely. If a child says they are feeling unwell, we will take their temperature as a matter of routine. If parents wish to take their child's temperature before school, please do and if they have a high temperature please do not send them to school and let us know

**Will parents receive fines if they do not send their child to school because they feel it is too risky?**

No, for the rest of this academic year, no parent will receive a fine if they choose to keep their children off of school. We totally understand and support parents who choose to do this.

**How will social distancing work with children who need one-to-one support?**

If children who usually have 1:1 support, we will continue to do this to the best of our capabilities. However this will not be anything like the support they may have had previously as all staff will be modelling social distancing throughout the day. We cannot also guarantee that the staff member they may have previously worked with, will be working with them on their return

**Will school still make learning available to children if parents keep their children at home?**

Our learning in school will mirror as closely as possible the learning on Google Classroom. We believe that the children of parents who choose not to send them in, should not be at a disadvantage by being at home. However, we hope you will understand that teachers may not be as active during the day on Google Classroom as they have been so far, due to them teaching in school.

**Is the school office still open?**

Yes the school office will be open, but due to social distancing will be operating on a skeletal staff. Parents will not be able to have face to face contact without an appointment. Parents should use the office or emergency email addresses or phone if they need to. If parents need to drop things off, they can do this by leaving them on the designated table in the school foyer, office staff can then communicate with parents through the intercom.

**Will they have access to computers?**

No, due to the potential risk of cross contamination and the difficulty in cleaning computers, children will not have access to the ICT suite or iPads at any point. The only exception to this is the keyworker/vulnerable group who will be allocated an individual iPad. This is because they will be accessing learning through Google Classroom whilst in school as they are a from a range of year groups.

**When are the other year groups returning and what will this look like?**

This, if it happens, will be a decision for the government. We have no indication, if this will happen, when it may happen and who it will affect.

**Will other school provision be as normal?**

No, there will be no option for Kidplays and there will be no before or after schools clubs.

**If I say yes to them coming back, but when they do they don't like it, can I change my mind?**

Yes of course, but this cannot be on a week by week basis as this will not allow us to safely plan.

**Can my child come in part time say 2 or 3 days a week?**

In principle no as this makes it impossible for us to plan. However, this may be numbers dependent. For example if numbers dictate we need to decide on children due us reaching our maximum, a parent wanting full time school would have to take precedence over a parent saying they will only be in part time. School should be either a full time choice, or not at all, as school will be open but not as a childcare facility.