



# Newsletter

Friday 15th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

So here we are, May 2020 and what a few months it's been. A short reflection and then I look to the future and our plans for after half-term (as they stand at this point in time).

I first want to thank you, our parents. We know for many of you it has been a challenging time: isolation, working from home, home schooling, redundancy, furlough and illness, but during this time you have shown resilience, you have offered your help to other members of the community, found teaching skills you never knew you had, stayed in contact with us and sent us some fantastic emails, videos, and we've had some great phone calls.

I also want to thank our staff. They have done the most amazing job transferring to virtual teachers. I am so, so proud of them. Every school day, week after week they have produced a video for your children, set the continuation of learning tasks, replied to numerous emails, spoken to you and /or your child on the phone (which on some days has taken up to 3 or 4 hours a day), provided emotional support, run #kingsleacares (our childcare for key worker children), made face coverings, continued with their professional development, revised planning for the summer and autumn terms, and supported me. You may say that is their job, and to an extent I agree, but the manner in which they've done it has been above and beyond. We also have to remember that many of our staff have been dealing with their own issues: home-schooling their own children, postponing weddings, partners on furlough, reduced incomes or redundancy, isolation from partners or serious illness in their own family. However, from the positivity of the videos and the emotional support they have given to children and parents, you wouldn't know the personal challenges they have faced. I am in awe of them.

So to the future. The government announced that the plan is for Reception, Y1 and Y6 to return to school on Monday 1st June, aiming for other year groups to return for the last four weeks of school. I am not going to go into the government's reasoning but I have put the links to the government documentation at the end of this newsletter for you to read through.

Our job is to plan for the possible reopening. If we follow the government's guidance and implement our own reopening plan, a plan we have developed with staff and governors, we believe we can reopen on the 1st June. We have had our own plan in place for a while; we have tweaked it using the latest government guidance and discussed with staff. All our staff who are able to return to work want to do everything they can to make this work in a safe, calm and sensible way. They are positive, in agreement with our reopening plans, and they want the children back.

However, and here is the *however*, it won't be quite as it was prior to closing in March. Essentially, children will be in groups of 15 and, as far as possible, they will stay in this group (or 'bubble' as we're calling it) in classrooms, outside at break time, lunch time etc with a staff member from their year group: for Reception and Y1 this will be their teacher and TA, for Y6 it will be a member of the Y6 team.

In summary:

- Classes will have no more than 15 children, with each group of 15 being a 'bubble'
- They will stay as a bubble in class, outside at break time, lunch time etc
- Reception and Y1 classes will be split into 2 groups/bubbles and each group/bubble will come to school on alternate days, for a full day, with a staggered start (between 8.30am and 8.50am) and end to the day (between 3pm and 3.20pm)
- Year 6 will be split into 4 groups/bubbles and come to school everyday
- Y2/3/4/5 will continue to learn virtually, but their daily videos will consist of a greater teaching element with three mini, pre-recorded lessons: maths, English and phonics or grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS). If they return, they will return in a similar way to Reception/Y1, in bubbles of 15 coming to school on alternate days.
- #kingsleacares will continue to run but Reception and Y1 children need to be in the Reception or Y1 bubble or #kingsleacares, not both.
- Chartwells will be serving hot lunches, Rocketeers will not be running for the rest of the term.

Alexis Conway and the staff of Kingslea Primary School

We cannot cover every scenario in the newsletter but on the last page are the links to the government documents we are working from. For those year groups that are in school, the aim is to have as normal a school day as possible, but with only half the class in at any one time and classes/year groups will not mix as they usually do—e.g. in assemblies, break times, lunch times etc, similar to some of the things we implemented in March.

### **What is a Kingslea bubble?**

- 15 children in a bubble (half the usual class number) usually with their class teacher and teaching assistant
- Adults and children will stay in this bubble all day, in their specified area of the school
- Bubbles will be made up of a balance of boys and girls, additional needs etc. Bubbles are fixed
- Children will be spread out in class and there will be staggered playtimes/lunchtimes for year groups
- Children will be encouraged to stay in their bubbles at playtimes, through playing in designated parts of the playground/field
- Less sharing of equipment—children will have their own zip wallets with equipment and books
- Bags, coats etc. will be in classrooms not in cloakrooms
- Using outside spaces more, moving in the corridors less and one-way systems where possible

### **Will my child be socially distanced 100% of the time?**

The government has been clear: the focus is on bubbles of up to 15. Primary-aged children cannot be expected to remain 2 metres apart from each other and staff. In Reception, social distancing is impossible and we will not even try to implement it as it could have greater emotional harm if implemented. In other year groups, children will be socially-distanced in the classroom. If your child needs medical attention that will be dealt with in the usual way, i.e. not socially distanced. The focus is on:

- Minimising contact and not mixing between bubbles
- Avoiding contact with anyone with symptoms
- Frequent hand washing and good respiratory practices
- Regular cleaning of settings

### **My child is in Reception, what else can you do to keep them safe?**

As we said, social distancing between pupils will not be enforced in Reception (because it can't be achieved in a humane manner). Therefore, we are having smaller classes, removing some equipment, increasing hygiene practices, washing hands more frequently, washing what equipment we can and spending more time outdoors.

### **Why can't my Reception or Y1 child come to school everyday?**

The government's plan for 15 children in a bubble means that we need double the amount of rooms that we have. As the proposal is for other year groups return to school, we do not have enough rooms to accommodate 28 groups of 15 children. It would also mean that your child may not be taught by their own teacher.

### **When will my Reception/Y1/Y6 child come to school?**

Reception/Y1 parents/carers will next week receive a Parentmail telling you whether your child is in Group 1 or 2. Groups will come alternate days, i.e. Group 1—Monday/Wednesday/Friday the first week then Tuesday /Thursday the next. Group 2—Tuesday/Thursday the first week then Monday/Wednesday/Friday the next. Y6 children will be in all day everyday . Siblings within Reception, Year 1 Year 6 will be in on the same day. Siblings within the other Year groups will remain at home.

We will provide you with guidance for learning on the days your child isn't in school.

Please note: From Monday 1st June the Reception/Y1/Y6 email addresses will no longer be in use.

### **As a parent how can I help?**

- Take your child's temperature before you come to school; we will only take temperatures if we have a concern
- If your child is at all unwell, or has a temperature above 37.8° c keep them at home.
- Ensure your child has washed their hands
- Be on time and stick to your time for the staggered start to the day
- School adults will not be routinely wearing face coverings so please socially distance from the teacher, and other adults
- Drop and go, please keep moving and do not stop and chat in the playground or outside the gates. At pick up time please be prompt but socially distance while waiting
- Send any messages for teachers via the school office phone number/email rather than on the playground
- Use the KS1 gate as an entrance only; the KS2 gate will be used as an entrance and exit

### **What about Y2/3/4/5?**

At the moment, these year groups will stay at home with the intention of returning for the last four weeks of term. If Y2/3/4/5 do return, then the plan at the moment will be a similar format to Y1, i.e. bubbles of 15 on alternate days.

- Y2/3/4/5 will continue to learn virtually but the daily videos will consist of a greater teaching element with three mini, pre-recorded lessons: maths, English and phonics or grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS).
- You can continue to contact teachers using the year-group email addresses
- Phone contact will be reduced as teachers will be covering #kingsleacares, preparing lesson videos and covering other year groups as needed.

### **What will happen if my child is in the specified year group to attend school but I choose not send him/her in?**

Our understanding is that the government will not be issuing fines to parents whose children do not return after 1st June (or a future specified date for Y2/3/4/5). However, if you choose to keep your child at home and change your mind you must contact the school first to discuss; you cannot just turn up.

We are looking into the practicalities of sending the teachers' planning to families where children are shielding at home. However, we will not be sending videos or be able to communicate about learning via email/phone with parents who choose not to send their children into school. Our teachers are good—very good—but they cannot run a full time physical and full time virtual classroom. For this reason, all communication for year groups who are in school will go through the office and those year group email addresses will not be used.

### **How can I communicate with the school office?**

- For the safety of our office staff, we ask you to communicate with the office via email and phone, even if you are on the premises.
- All items required for the day should enter school with the child. Forgotten items should not be brought in and will not be accepted.
- If you do have to come to the office, only one person in the lobby at a time and please stand at least two metres from the office window.



### **What will Kingslea do if there is a suspected COVID-19 case?**

- We have a separate, ventilated isolation room (not the medical room) which will only be used for suspected cases
- The child will be supervised by an adult who will wear PPE equipment
- The parent will be called to come and collect the child
- The child will be given a face covering to wear (to protect others) when they leave the building to be collected by their parents

### **What happens if there is a confirmed case?**

The child/staff member would self isolate for 7 days, with rest of household isolating for 14 days. Any child or member of staff who displays symptoms will be encouraged to be tested for COVID-19.

Where the child/staff member tests negative, they can return to school. Where the test is positive, the rest of the 'bubble' will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. Household members of the bubble do not need to self-isolate unless the child/staff member subsequently develops symptoms.

### **What should I do if my family are shielding or extremely clinically vulnerable?**

Children classed as extremely clinically vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions are not expected to return to school. Those classed as clinically vulnerable should follow medical advice as to whether a return to school at this time is advisable. If your child lives with an extremely clinically vulnerable adult then they should only attend 'if stringent social distancing can be adhered to'. As a school we cannot guarantee that, therefore your child will need to stay at home.

### **Do you or your child need someone to talk to?**

In this unusual situation, you may no longer have your usual support group around you. If you, or your child, would like a friendly voice on the end of the phone, help on how to cope with the current situation, one-off crisis counselling support or a combination of all three, please contact us. If you would like to access this support, please ring the office and leave a message for Mrs Barrett or email [pbarrett@kingslea.org.uk](mailto:pbarrett@kingslea.org.uk)

### **Safeguarding**

Our key priority is always the care and safeguarding of children. We are in regular contact with many families and pupils but, if you have a non-urgent safeguarding issue, please email [dsl@kinglsea.org.uk](mailto:dsl@kinglsea.org.uk). If something is urgent, you can contact MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub) on 01403229900 or the police on 999.

### **Kingslea Community Fund**

Using some school funding and through generous donations from Kingslea parents we are able to give limited support to Kingslea families where the change to the economy and the job market has meant your household has seen a sudden and significant drop in income. We are able to support families who are struggling to pay for food and other essentials, in the form of a supermarket voucher. If this would help you out, please email [aconway@kingslea.org.uk](mailto:aconway@kingslea.org.uk) and we will see what we can do. This would be in confidence.

We also have families who are able to help with shopping and other tasks. Please contact Mrs Hill if you need help.

### **Government documents**

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for schools and other educational settings](#)

[What parents and carers need to know about schools and other education settings during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020](#)