

HUTTON RUDBY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Head Teacher: Mr Matthew Kelly



Address: Doctor's Lane, Hutton Rudby, Yarm, North Yorkshire, TS15 0EQ

Telephone: 01642 700203 **Email:** admin@huttonrudby.n-yorks.sch.uk

20 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, and most importantly, I hope that both you and all your families are fit and well.

It is an incredibly challenging and uncertain time for all of us. If the last few months have taught me anything, it is that at times of great stress and crisis we see the very best in people. I can hand on heart say how lucky I am to be Head teacher of Hutton Rudby Primary School. The way that you, our families, the heartbeat of our school community, have supported your own children with home-learning (no easy thing to do) and shown such empathy, patience and understanding with both me and the school staff, has been really overwhelming. Thank you.

I am sure that everybody has been keeping up to speed with the daily news briefings and will be desperate to find out how school is planning for a proposed 1st June return for certain year groups. Over two-thirds of parents have responded to the questionnaire I put out to you on Thursday (thank you for this). There is no easy solution to the huge strategic and logistic problem a 1st June return to school presents. The health and safety parameters that schools must and should adopt to manage the risks apparent to children and staff are incredibly challenging to implement effectively in a primary school setting.

Therefore, I have undertaken the following steps to help me develop a plan for school to re-open for certain year groups from 1st June. This included:

- Liaising with governors, seeking their opinion and advice.
- Undertaking a full risk assessment of the school site with senior staff.
- Receiving guidance from NYCC and other NYCC Head teachers.
- Receiving guidance from our School Advisor, Lis Marsden.
- Undertaking a staff questionnaire, taking into consideration staff views.
- Undertaking a parent questionnaire, acting upon parental views and concerns.
- Consulting guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Although the situation at the moment seems to be changing on a daily basis. As it stands, we plan to open school the week commencing 1st June in a phased manner to children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 6 and Critical Key Worker children in groups of no more than 15 children as per government guidance.

However, this does come with a caveat. I cannot guarantee a place for every child in these groupings. Due to the obvious limitations of space in the school site and the fact that all children MUST be in a social bubble of no more than 15, this means that by using every available classroom (7 in total) and the IT suite, we have the capacity to safely run 8 social bubble groups of 15 children maximum.

These groups will be staffed by teachers and teaching assistants, again due to limitations in staffing numbers. This utilises all 6 available teachers and our only 2 full time teaching assistants who are able to be allocated accordingly. Hence there is a chance that your child will NOT, should you choose to send them back to school post 1st June, be with their current class teacher.



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Guidance from the government indicates that priority must be given to Critical Key Workers. I know that many of our Key Workers have worked from home throughout the last few months and followed government guidance by not sending their child or children to school. I am incredibly grateful to you for doing this. It has enabled me to rota my staff and help try and keep them safe. I impress upon you, that if you are a Key Worker and able to continue to do this, then please do still work from home. I fully appreciate that it is not easy working with your children around you at home, but we are faced with an unprecedented situation, one which none of us have encountered previously.

With all this in mind, in order for me to establish potential numbers and plan exactly which groups of children will be phased back to school first, I would be grateful if you could complete the attached forms to this letter and email them back to school by **Thursday 21st May at 5pm**. I know that this is an incredibly quick turn around, but I am sure that you will appreciate that I need to let parents know as soon as possible that we have space for their child and the social bubble group that their child will be in.

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What will school look like 1st June?

I cannot stress this enough, the guidance schools receive may change in the coming weeks. Nothing at the moment is set in stone and I will keep you as up to date as quickly as I possibly can. Therefore, as it stands school will look like the following:

- Children will be allocated a “social bubble group”. This bubble will be no more than the government mandated level of 15 children.
- The “bubbles” will have a dedicated staff member who will lead that bubble, but I must stress that this may not be your child’s class teacher as keeping our bubble groups small means the need to split our classes up.
- The bubbles will be allocated a teaching space (again it is possible it won’t be your child’s usual classroom). In Reception, access to the outside area will be gained by separate outside doors and the outside will be roped off to give them dedicated areas.
- Elsewhere in school, a timetable of the use of outdoor space will be in place. This means that once your child enters school into their bubble they will stay with that group for the entire day making tracking and tracing of any possible outbreak easier.
- We will attempt as is reasonably practicable, everything we can to try and follow social distancing rules and ‘bubble guidelines’. Children will stay in their bubble with the same children and consistent staff member for the foreseeable future. Movement around the school site will be limited and wherever possible will not happen. Once the children enter their teaching space they will not leave that area until they are collected, the only exception to this being at playtime and lunchtime where it is essential that the children gain fresh air and burn off excess energy. I must stress that children will have access to outdoor provision so please don’t think they will be kept inside the whole time.
- Lunchtimes will look different. Lunches will be staggered. Social distancing rules will apply and will be encouraged but we will not be drawing chalk squares on the ground for the children to play in! I would advise that children bring a packed lunch to school. It will enable children to eat in their classrooms and avoid movement around school. However, a School Lunch will be made available should your child require one (Please complete the attached form regarding whether or not your child will require a school meal).
- Each social bubble group will be supplied as is the current normal practice in classrooms, with a first aid kit. The member of staff leading each group will deal with first aid within class where possible – for examples cuts, scrapes, nose bleeds, head bumps etc. Serious injuries will be dealt with in the medical room – under no circumstances will any child be sent to the School office.
- Individual sets of resources for each child, e.g pens, pencils, rulers, rubbers, scissors etc will be provided. Resources in Reception and Year 1 will be managed at teacher’s/teaching assistant’s discretion. I firmly believe that the removal of familiar children’s resources at this age will have a severe detrimental impact upon the health and wellbeing of the child and will do far greater harm than good. However, reading books will not be sent home. This is to adhere with guidance from the Department of Education and to further prevent cross contamination and children from different social bubble groups accessing the same book even at different times.

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- Children will be allocated individual desk spaces – the same each day. This is with the exception of Reception. I feel that it is not reasonable or practical or in fact possible to expect a reception child to sit at the same desk all day, every day and not move. I would argue that this would be a challenge to all adults also.
- All furniture will be removed that obstructs corridors, to ensure all corridors are as wide as practicably possible.
- Critical Worker children in years 2,3,4 and 5 will be based in their own social bubble group. As we may be faced with a dramatic increase in Key Worker children, even if you have previously had your Critical Key Worker status confirmed by school or if you have been sending your child to school, can you please confirm again your key worker status with evidence of this (see attached forms). If you know your shift/work patterns over the next few weeks, could you please confirm this also. However, I do appreciate that this may be difficult for some people and shift patterns change at short notice. If you think you are a Critical Worker and have not previously had this confirmed by school, then you must let school know by Thursday (see attached forms) providing evidence of your Key Worker status (school may need to seek further clarification of this with your employer directly).
- Although we will endeavour to social distance at all times I am sure that you will understand that this will be more difficult for our younger children. Therefore we will be doing our best to reinforce social distancing with them in as sensitive a way as we can.
- Our staff will NOT wear PPE unless we have someone who displays symptoms of COVID-19. In this event that child will be re-located in the School Bungalow until their parents/carers arrive at school to take them home. Your child/ren will be able to receive a COVID-19 test as will any other members of your household, which can be booked through www.nhs.uk/coronavirus. If the result is positive, then your child, all the children in that particular social bubble, and the member of staff with that group will be required to self-isolate for 14 days at home.
- Regarding staff wearing PPE; we feel that to implement PPE across school will be of detrimental effect to all, and government guidance at this time states we do not need to wear it. We have a risk assessment in place if someone becomes symptomatic on site and a plan to follow if that happens. Therefore, children will also NOT be asked / allowed to wear facial coverings of any description.
- No additional entry to school will be allowed. Not even to the school office unless by prior appointment. This is for everyone's safety. We have always had an "open door" policy for our families but for the time being we need to make sure we keep everyone safe. If you need to speak to a member of staff, please phone the office first and arrange a time to do so.
- Parents will be asked to bring their children to a designated entrance and collect them from the same place (once numbers are confirmed information on this will be provided). We will ask that only **1 adult** comes to the school site at pick up and drop off times and that they keep to social distancing rules when they do. Areas will be marked out and clear signage will be up around our site to help with this. Once we have confirmation on the number of children we will have returning to school, we will be sending home further instructions regarding drop off and pick up times and guidance outlining exactly how parents will drop off and pick up their children. We will include a visual map of the school site in this guidance and a video

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explanation. It is also likely we will operate on a different timetable of school opening and closing. This allows for an extended cleaning regime each evening.

- Each teaching area will be set up to include disinfectant stations, hand sanitising areas and all soft furnishings will be removed as per government guidelines. Access to toilets will be allocated with extra cleaning supplies available to reduce the chance of cross contamination.
- Children will need to wear their school uniform to school as they usually do. They will need their PE kit each day including trainers. They will also need a named water bottle as we will not be able to give out cups.

Before and After School Club

Before and After School Club will be available, but not its normal format. Any child must be booked into Before and After School club with a minimum of 72 hours (3 days) notice. The children will sit in the School Hall at a separate tables spaced 2 metres apart. The children will be able to undertake basic activities such as reading a book, colouring in, word searches, filling in puzzle books. A film for these children to watch will also be played in the Hall.

Due to the exceptional circumstances we find ourselves in and as a gesture of goodwill there will be no charge for before and after school club until further notice.

Timings of Before and After School Club

8:00 – 8:45 Monday to Friday mornings

3:15 – 5:30 Monday to Friday evenings

Children who need picking up and dropping off at the Before and After School Club will do this through the main school entrance. Parents/Carers any other adult either dropping off or picking up their child will not be permitted to enter the school building to do this in order to limit contact and maximise safety.

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What will the curriculum look like?

The children's health and wellbeing will be at the forefront of everything that we will do.

DfE guidance states that:

'schools continue to be best placed to make decisions about how to support and educate all pupils during this period'.

Children's emotional well-being is central to their capacity to learn effectively; if wellbeing is cared for the children will hit the ground running when they are ready and make up the lost learning relatively quickly as evidenced in other countries. That will be our primary focus. Children will want to catch up with classmates, talk about their different isolation experiences. We will focus on wellbeing, safeguarding, routines, and identify any children who will need additional support due to the current situation.

In Reception and Year 1 we will focus upon early reading, phonics and basic skills in maths. Where we can, we will keep to the Foundation Stage Framework in Reception, although bearing in mind the core curriculum in EYFS is based upon communication and interaction and personal, social and emotional development, given social distancing guidelines this will be very difficult to achieve but this will remain our priority.

In Year 6 we will prepare the children as best we can for transition to secondary school. We will focus upon basic maths skills and provide opportunities for the children to write freely. We will undertake artist studies and expand the children's general knowledge of the world around them.

In our Key Worker groups, children will access the home learning work provided by their normal class teacher. The children will also focus upon basic maths skills for their relevant year group and likewise expand their general knowledge.

I appreciate that many children will not be returning to school in some capacity from 1st June. With this in mind, we have taken the decision to continue ALL home learning for the foreseeable future in ALL year groups. We will shortly be providing further ideas and websites with some fantastic home learning ideas in addition to our current home learning provision.

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What will happen in September?

I wish that I had a crystal ball and could give a fully comprehensive answer to this question. It is anybody's guess as to what the educational landscape will look like in September. Hopefully, all children will be able to return to school. Therefore, in order to provide the children with some semblance of stability and to enable them to hit the ground running in September, your current child's class teacher will continue to be their class teacher in September, should this be permitted given the current situation.

This would mean the staffing for next year would be as follows:

Reception – Miss Martin

Year 1 – Mrs Trevis

Year 2 – Miss Palmer

Year 3 – Miss Clark

Year 4 – Mrs Ruddy

Year 5 – Mr Beckwith

Year 6 – Mr Johnson

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I hope that this information gives you an idea of what school's initial plans are. School WILL look very different. It won't be our normal way of operating but we are here to support our children and our families on this road back to some sort of normal life. I can't guarantee 100% safety from COVID-19, no one can and if I could do that I would have everyone back in school in a heartbeat. What I can guarantee is our commitment to doing everything we possibly can to safeguard our children, families and my staff.

In the run up to school reopening I ask you all to be extra vigilant in your social distancing at home. If anyone displays symptoms of COVID-19 then please do not attend the school site but follow NHS guidelines and isolate.

If your child or a member of your family has a shielding letter as they have been deemed to be extremely vulnerable then we would advise you to keep them at home during this time, regardless of whether they are in the named year group or not.

Whilst attendance at school will be taken, families will NOT be penalised for not bringing their children to school at this time. Attendance procedures and fines are suspended during this reopening and so no family will be negatively affected if they choose to keep their child away from school at the moment. That is your choice as a family to make and you are welcome to do this.

What do you need to do next?

- 1. Complete the attached forms to this letter and return to school via email no later than 5pm on Thursday 21st May.**
- 2. Make sure your child has a labelled water bottle (drinking cups will not be provided by school).**
- 3. Make sure that your child has a labelled PE kit and pair of trainers to bring to school.**

I know this is a scary time for everyone but we are all in it together. In the meantime, please get in touch if you have any questions or queries. The situation is not ideal for anyone.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. It is appreciated now more than ever.

Take care and stay safe everyone.

Matthew Kelly

Head teacher