



10<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

## School Re-Opening Information

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. I would like to provide you information regarding the wider re-opening of the school to certain year groups. I understand the anxiety and frustration that many families are feeling. I hope this letter and the information within, serves as a useful update for you and your family.

As you are aware following the slight easing of the current 'lockdown' procedures, schools were asked by the Government to begin preparing for a partial return to school of children from the year groups Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

Due to the increased demand for places of children of Key Workers and those children classed as Vulnerable in Government guidance, we have now almost reached full capacity across the school. Therefore, as well as the increase for these groups of children, we are aiming towards a further extended opening for a small group of children in **Year 6 (Willow)**

**This extension will take place from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.**

I would like to set out below how we intend to do this safely for children, staff and yourselves as parents and carers for the year groups above whose parents/carers have indicated they would like a place at school through the recent survey.

I am sure many parents/carers may wish to 'wait and see' how we can implement our plans and I understand this fully. However, please be aware that we will need at least 5 working days' notice to admit further children due to the complex nature of the planning involved. You will not be able to simply 'drop off' your child(ren) without informing the school.

**My apologies for the length of the letter but it is important you read each section thoroughly.**

Excellence for All



## The School Day

The timings of the school day will be staggered to ensure we can maintain social distancing on arrival and exit from the school, as set out in the table below:

| Group                          | Start Time | Finish Time | Finish Time on Friday * | Main Base        | Entrance/Exit<br>(clear signage is situated around outdoor area)    |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------|---|
| DSP PODs<br>(LA transport)     | 8.50       | 2.50        | 12.30                   | DSP Classrooms   | via Wood Road entrance<br>Gate A – DSP gate                         |
| DSP PODs<br>(family transport) | 9.00       | 2.40        | 12.30                   |                  |   |
| Red POD                        | 8.30       | 2.30        | 12.30                   | Oak Class        | via The Avenue entrance<br>Gate D – EYFS gate                       |
| Yellow POD                     | 8.30       | 3.00        | 12.30                   | Maple Class      | via The Avenue entrance<br>Gate C – KS1 and 2 main<br>entrance gate |
| Pink POD                       | 8.30       | 2.45        | 12.30                   | Elm Class        | via Wood Road entrance<br>Gate B – gate onto KS2<br>playground      |
| Green POD                      | 8.45       | 2.45        | 12.30                   | Alder Class      | via The Avenue entrance<br>Gate C – KS1 and 2 main<br>entrance gate |
| Orange POD                     | 8.50       | 3.00        | 12.30                   | Beech Class      | via Wood Road entrance<br>Gate B – gate onto KS2<br>playground      |
| Purple POD                     | 9.00       | 2.15        | 12.30                   | Fir Class        | via The Avenue entrance<br>Gate C – KS1 and 2 main<br>entrance gate |
| Blue POD                       | 9.15       | 2.30        | 12.30                   | Willow Classroom | via The Avenue entrance<br>Gate C – KS1 and 2 main<br>entrance gate |

**\* Friday** – school will close early to allow deep cleaning to take place of all classrooms in preparation for Monday and staff the afternoon to plan for the next week's activities.

Lunch will be provided so these can be taken away



## **Drop off / Pick Up, Use of the Car Park & Public Transport**

As you can see from the timings of the day, we have staggered these to ensure social distancing can be maintained. We are asking all parents and carers when 'dropping off' and 'picking up' to remain **OUTSIDE** the school gates and please adhere to the 2m Social Distancing markings. Staff members from each POD will walk to the gates to collect your child(ren). During these times, please ensure that only one family member brings their child(ren) to school and drops them off at their designated entrance(s), and wherever possible siblings who are not attending school are not brought to school at these times.

Upon arrival children will be asked to line up (2m apart) and use the hand sanitizer provided before they enter the building. Children's temperature will be taken before they enter school. As each year group has their own area this will limit the amount of cross over during the school day.

If you are driving to school please ensure you park in one of the marked bays only in either the main car park from **The Avenue** or those few spaces within the DSP turning circle area from **Wood Road**, and **bring your child(ren) to their allocated entrance** ; the main entrance into the main building will be for **staff only**.

If children are using public transport, please ensure you and your child are fully aware of and follow the guidance for the use of public transport. The recommendations on transport to and from school allude to reducing any unnecessary travel on coaches, buses or public transport where possible (for example, by walking or cycling to school).

If you have children in different Year Groups expected to attend but have different start and finish times please can you drop them off for the earlier start time and the older sibling can go to their classroom. In terms of picking up; siblings will need to leave together at the earlier finish time. If you can make this known to a member of staff on gate duty when dropping off this will help our planning.

Please can I politely remind all parents and carers to observe the social distancing measures at all times and be patient with each other and staff as this is new for everyone. You should not gather outside the school gates after dropping off or picking up.

## **Uniform**

Children will **NOT** be expected to wear uniform; however, we do expect children to be in clean and appropriate clothes every day. This decision has been taken to reduce the chance of infection from dirty clothes and we appreciate that daily washing of uniform might not always be practical. Also, we appreciate that children may not have uniform and we don't want families to incur any additional costs in purchasing new items of uniform.



## Class PODS & Class Sizes

We have worked very closely as a school team and with external support from the Wade Deacon Trust and Health and Safety advisors to ensure the maximum safety possible for both our children and staff. Following recent guidance, we are working on the premise of having 'Class PODS'.

This means that children will be taught in Class PODS of no more than 6 children each and will have the same teacher and teaching assistants supporting them throughout the week as far as is reasonably practical. Each Class POD will have their own classroom, toilet, outdoor space, entrance and exit, with each child in each having their own table, chair and equipment to ensure we reduce the risk of infection.

PODS will have their own designated area of the playground and they will be able to 'play / socialise' with **members of their class POD only – class PODS will not be able to mix at any point throughout the day.** Staff will take every reasonable step to ensure children are adhering to these PODS and social distancing measures.

Children may not be with their friends and may be allocated to a POD with children from another year group. Once allocated, these groups will not be changed as children will not be allowed to mix between groups.

***Children may not be with their usual class teacher, as classes are split and groups of children and adults will have to remain the same.***

## Learning

I know you appreciate, this is a very complex and challenge situation for all concerned and it is only to be expected that learning will be different. Staff will provide a range of activities and learning to suit the needs of their classes, in the same way as they have set home learning tasks. Practical Activities in subjects such as Science, DT and PE **will not be permitted at this time**, due to the nature of the activities and the complex risk assessments needed for these to be enjoyed safely.

The wider Curriculum with focus on mental health and fitness: there will be a daily circle time for each POD to support this, alongside PSHE, and physical activity will be built into each day.

Outdoor learning will safely take place as much as possible, weather permitting, within the POD's own allocated spaces.



We will provide each child with their own pack of equipment which should not be shared with any other children and children must not bring any of their own equipment into school; staff will reinforce this with children at regular intervals.

Learning materials, such as reading books that are used in school, will not be sent home during this time.

## **Toilet Facilities**

We are incredibly fortunate to have a new building with many toilet areas. We have planned to areas to ensure each POD has access to their own toilet area – please note during this time all toilets will be unisex. Children will be encouraged to wash their hands regularly eg on entrance to school and before hometime, breaks and lunchtimes. There will be soap, hot running water and hand towels to dry hands as electric hand dryers, usually available in all toilet areas, are currently switched off.

## **Signage**

We will increase the signage around the school to remind all children to wash their hands regularly and this will be built into the day for children. We will ensure that we demarcate appropriate distancing when children access areas and for visitors to the school.

## **Lunch, Break Time & Food and Drink**

Those children entitled to a Universal (R, Y1 and Y2) and Free School Meals will receive a packed lunch free of charge.

**Please be aware, that this will replace the current fortnightly voucher scheme for these children.**

Packed lunches will be brought to their classroom for children to eat together in their Class PODS , to ensure that we limit infection by keeping multiple children from entering the dining hall.

You may wish to send your child(ren) with their own packed lunch. Please advise them that this should not be shared with anyone. It is also advisable that children bring their own drinks bottle (clearly labelled and filled) as the water fountains will have to be switched off. Children will keep these under their desks in their PODS and we ask that packed lunches from home are put into plastic bags that can be thrown away each day, after the child has eaten.

Please be reminded that fizzy or energy drinks are not allowed.



## **Support for children with SEND**

We will work with families and children to provide the best possible support for children with SEND and make reasonable adjustment as necessary to ensure the safety of children and staff. Should any parents and carers wish to discuss this in detail please contact Miss Appleton or Miss Riley by emailing school at [yewtree@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:yewtree@knowsley.gov.uk)

## **Cleaning Considerations & Movement around the site**

We have worked very closely with our maintenance provider to ensure regular cleaning has and will take place as it has done so far. In addition to this, extra cleaning will take place throughout the day. We will ensure there is enough tissues, soap, hand towels, hand sanitiser and bins with closed lids in each POD to keep everyone as safe as possible.

We have moved soft furnishings and certain toys out of classrooms; activities will be carefully planned to ensure regular cleaning of toys and books can be undertaken.

The doors of each classroom will be 'wedged open' to ensure staff and children do not need to touch door handles and along with opened windows, provide suitable ventilation in each of the rooms.

## **Behaviour**

We will continue to follow our Behaviour for Learning Policy with some amendments to current rules, which can be found on our website. Nevermore have these principles been more important. It is critical, as always, children co-operate with staff and follow instructions for the safety and well-being of everyone.

Any behaviour that might put others in danger will not be tolerated and appropriate sanctions put in place if necessary. To support this we have amended our home school agreement, and this will need signing by both your child(ren), as well as yourself, prior to your child(ren) returning to school.

## **First Aid & Medication**

Children that require first aid will still be able to access this and additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including surgical masks, aprons, gloves and eye shield/goggles, will be provided to the designated first aiders. If your child takes regular medication, please let their POD staff members know.



## **Pastoral Support for Well-Being and Mental Health**

We are very aware that the coronavirus outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children. It is important to recognise that while 'getting back to normal' is important and will be reassuring for many, we will consider how to support children back into school.

We know some children may also have experienced bereavements in their immediate family or wider circle of friends or family or had increased/new caring responsibilities. All children will have missed the routine of school, seeing their friends, and being supported by their teachers and other adults in the school. Therefore, we will provide opportunities for children to talk about their experiences of the past few weeks.

## **Home Learning**

Home learning for all other children not accessing PODS will continue. I have set out below what this will look like.

Work will be set on a weekly cycle with a themed approach, as in our previous home learning packs and online resources; which has been carefully planned by staff to include a range of different activities, which also allow family members from different year groups to work on tasks together. There will be a set of activities for online learners and a set for those who want a break from their computer or who don't have access to the internet on request. Both sets will include, Reading, Spelling/Phonics, Writing, Maths, as well as a themed approach to DT, RE, Science, Art etc

Please continue to encourage your child to send in their work to our staff team through their Class Dojo accounts. Staff will then look to celebrate great examples of work and effort to encourage children to get involved. You can pick which lessons you follow but try and stick to a minimum as above if possible. Work will not always be new topics but will look to build skills and reinforce previous learning to develop real mastery of subject areas

As has previously been the case, the school website will also have the resources if you are finding access to Class Dojo difficult. Top Tips for working at home to support pupils and parents is on the Primary Twitter page and will also go on the school website.

BBC Bitesize has also launched online lessons that are specific to Year Groups and split into subjects. These can be found on <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>



The Department for Education has also launched the Oak National Academy which is providing lessons specific to Year Groups and split into subjects. These can be found by visiting <https://www.thenational.academy/>

## **Key Worker/Vulnerable Children**

Key Worker and vulnerable children will continue to be supported as they are currently. However, where year groups are in school that correspond with keyworker children we will assign these to appropriate classes.

## **Visitors and Guidance on accessing the school Reception Desk**

There will be no parents and carers meetings on-site during this period and we will continue to limit the external visitors to the school during school hours.

Only one person at a time will be allowed into the main office and signage will ensure this is clear to visitors. We have a duty to protect our staff and I appreciate your co-operation in this matter. There will clear markings on where to queue to access the office if this is necessary.

**Please note visitors and parents and carers will not be permitted into the main entrance or the foyer and main office.**

**If you need to contact a member of staff please call the main office on 0151 477 8950 or email school on [yewtree@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:yewtree@knowsley.gov.uk)**

As always, we will continue to use our social media and website to communicate any updates with you. These are listed below.

**Website: [www.yewtreeknowsley.gov.uk](http://www.yewtreeknowsley.gov.uk)**

**Twitter: [@YewTreeCP](https://twitter.com/YewTreeCP)**

I hope this letter has served as an clear indication of what we will endeavour to put in place as control measures to minimise risks but this will not mean that risks can be removed altogether. However, it should be taken in to account that children who are classed as clinically vulnerable, due to pre-existing medical conditions are not expected to return for the time being. Parents who decide not to send their child back to school until September will not receive any penalty or fine.



# YEW TREE PRIMARY ACADEMY

Finally, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for your understanding and ongoing support in helping us to manage this unprecedented situation.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs R O'Hanlon

Principal

**DREAMBIG**

(Determined – Resilient – Empowered – Adventurous – Motivated – Beautifully Behaved – Inclusive – Generous).

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