

21/05/2020

**Potential wider opening of school from June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Dear Parents and Carers, You will have heard and seen in the media that schools **may** start the process of re-opening (not that we have actually been closed!) to pupils in Reception, Year 1, and Year 6 from June 1<sup>st</sup>. The messaging has implied that all children in these year groups will be in school from that date. **This will not be the case.** At Old Moat, as in many schools in Manchester, we will work on a cohort by cohort basis, starting with Year 1. Last week we sent out a survey to you and we would like to take this opportunity to thank the many families that responded. Your engagement with this survey has allowed us to get a sense of your confidence in the Government's proposals and it has supported our initial planning for the potential return to school. At the end of this letter you will find a series of Frequently Asked Questions from your responses which we have tried to answer to the best of our ability.

We hope to have Year 1 children back in school from Tuesday June 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are endeavouring to reduce the residual risk of infection spreading but we know that we cannot eliminate it completely. Measures we will take will include- but are not limited to – the following.

- We will send timings of attendance in due course and will work around key worker/vulnerable childcare provision so that the numbers of people arriving on site at any one time are kept low.
- Teachers will be working on Mondays but will use the time for class planning, preparation and assessment, in addition to planning home learning and keeping in touch with pupils who have not yet returned. Therefore school will only be open for pupils of Key Workers/vulnerable pupils on Mondays.
- The children will be taught in groups of no more than 15 as per the government's own advice. They will remain in the same room for all lessons with the same teacher, all week. In effect this creates a restricted 'pod' and if one of the group were to contract Coronavirus, all members of that same group would be required to self-isolate for 14 days.
- Children will have a personal supply of stationery so that they don't have to share resources with others.

**Interim Executive Principal: Mrs. S Lamb**

- Classrooms and toilet areas will be cleaned each lunchtime in readiness for the afternoon session, and again at the end of each day when children and staff have left.
- Classrooms will have plentiful supplies of sanitiser and tissues.
- Lunchtimes will be staggered and children will eat in their classroom pod.
- Ensuring social distancing during playtimes will be difficult but we will remind children about it at regular intervals and will have separate playtimes for each pod.
- Parents/Carers will not be able to enter the school site to reduce the amount of adult to adult contact.

We will monitor how all this works and then consider introducing another year group when we feel it is safe to do so. We will be in touch with information regarding the next year group in due course. We recognise that this is unsettling and it would be helpful to have more definitive plans but we must keep the safety of pupils, parents and staff as our priority.

We are desperate to have all of the children back in school but their return needs to be managed as safely as possible and we believe that a staged approach is best. Please be prepared for the strong possibility that not all year groups will be able to return before the summer holidays.

We look forward to seeing you all as soon as it is safe to do so and until then hope all our families stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. O. Kerr  
Head of School

Mrs. S. Lamb  
Headteacher

Frequently Asked Questions from the Parental Survey

Question	Answer
How will you maintain social distancing between pupils?	We will do our very best to encourage children to social distance and classrooms will be set up to support this but we cannot guarantee that children will not have contact with other pupils.
Will pupils wear face masks/coverings?	No. The science suggests that this could exacerbate transmission in young children.
Will children with additional support still receive this?	If your child usually has additional support they may still receive this. Mrs. McNicholas will contact any parents this affects.
Will home learning still be provided for pupils not able to return to school?	Yes. We would ask for your patience though. While we gradually open to more pupils home learning may be slightly affected.
When will the summer holidays be?	We still intend to break up for the summer holidays on Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July. We do not yet know exactly how school will reopen for the new academic year in September. We will keep parents updated on this.
Will there be after school clubs and holiday provision?	No. To reduce the risk of transmission we will keep school opening hours for pupils and staff as limited as possible.
Who will teach my child?	We are redesigning our staffing rota to meet the demands of more pupils. To effectively social distance we will limit the number of staff to one per pod (unless a child has additional support) and this person will be consistent throughout the week. The following week the pod will be taught by a different adult.
Will pupils need to wear uniform?	We understand that some children may have outgrown uniform and it could be difficult to wash uniform on a daily basis. With this in mind we will be flexible with our approach to uniform. Children can wear uniform or their own clothes but must wear sensible footwear suitable for P.E.