



Friday 22nd May 2020 - School Update

Clarification of Issues

Dear Parent/Carer,

Everyone will be aware of our announcement on Wednesday regarding school opening to more children. I would like to sincerely thank everyone for the many incredibly supportive messages we have received. I continue to be aware of the many feelings and emotions regarding the Government's decision to potentially re-open schools for more children and I am very appreciative of the way families have approached me to discuss this. I will continue to reiterate that we are continuing to be here to work with every member of our school community as we continue to welcome back more children. I completely understand and respect that for some people June 1st may not be the right time. At present I'd like to inform you that we expect to have 82 children back in school on June 1st, if the Government decide to reopen school in this way. This includes children in Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and emergency care.

As part of our announcement I suggested families should get in touch with any questions and concerns. I have been delighted to have had many conversations over the last two days with some really important questions around key issues which has been very useful. I have used this as an opportunity to consult and discuss issues with parents as part of the process of welcoming more children back and have found my conversations with you all incredibly supportive and helpful.

I completely understand all of these very relevant points and hope I have been able to answer the questions arising. As a result I would like to offer the below clarification on some aspects. The published plan has been added to in order to reflect this and the key points are highlighted below. Please take time to look through these and our plan again to ensure you are aware how this will impact you and your child.

As we move forward together on this incredibly challenging journey, I want to encourage all families to continue to email in questions so I can respond to you as part of the process of inviting more children back to school should the Government decide. It is my opinion that we can only do this together and through discussion and consultation with you all I am able to provide the best environment for your children to return to school when the Government decide.

Thank you

Mr D Kennedy

Headteacher

Pick up and drop off

There was a slight error in pick up and drop off times for emergency care. Drop off for this group is 9:00am and pick up is 3:15pm. This has now been amended and can be viewed on the plan correctly now as it has been updated to reflect this. Parents of Siblings can choose the best drop off and pick up times for them. For example a parent with a year 1 and a Year 6 child could choose either the Year 1 or Year 6 drop off and pick up. It would be preferable to choose the later pick up from school so children don't miss out on their work. Children of other year groups can remain in their pod until collection if this is the case.

Toilet arrangements

Each pod will be allocated their own toilets which are only to be used by the 15 children in that pod. Within each pod, children will also be allocated a blue or red toilet. This will ensure groups of only 7/8 children are using one toilet. Each toilet will be cleaned every hour throughout the day and at specific times of use as well and we will be ensuring only one child at a time uses the toilet area.

Medical concerns

If there has been any change in medical details for your child we ask that you notify us by emailing into school. Please email bursar@aughtonchristchurch.lancs.sch.uk and we can organise a phone consultation with you.

Attending different days

Some families have asked about only attending on certain days. Whilst we have run in this way to support emergency care this is not how we are running the return to school for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. This will be a return to school with a planned curriculum which relies on children attending every day where possible. Children thrive on consistency and returning to school in a consistent daily pattern will offer this support for them emotionally and also for their learning. Only coming in for 1 or 2 days a week for morning is not something we would recommend. Once children are back in school we will certainly be able to monitor and discuss any concerns with you. However, the evidence of children in school at the moment and my experience in school for over 20 years, is children will settle incredibly quickly and be happy with their routine and environment. It is also not possible to send work home for days the children won't be in school as this is an additional challenge to manage when staff will be at capacity and the work in school will rely on the teaching input they will be receiving.

Social distancing

It is acknowledged by the government that children and school settings are unique and social distancing is not always possible. I would like to confirm this is the case. Whilst very individual spaces will be provided in class time for children, during playtime outside in their pod children will have the opportunity to play with the other 14 children. This is often in small groups of three or four and children are generally playing with distance between each other. We discuss rules with children at any point in school life and currently we discuss social spacing rules. We call this '*your safe space*' and during the period of our school being open to emergency care we have encouraged children to play respecting their own and their friend's safe space. This has worked really well with children playing and interacting. We have not had any issues. It should also be acknowledged that children having the opportunity to play and be with other children is an important aspect of social, mental and emotional wellbeing. We are very fortunate in our school to have such lovely grounds and children who have been in school have thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from their play experiences in a zone for their pod.

Learning in EYFS

Learning in all classes will look different. Children will have their own workspace and individual resources in all year groups. However, despite the distancing measure being introduced, Reception children will still be learning to support work towards Early Learning Goals. Although resources and context may look slightly different, they will still be provided for opportunities to explore and be creative. This week, Reception children in emergency care have been making nature pictures outside for example. It is also worth noting that as we enter June, Reception children are also considering transition to Year 1, which for many children is a more formal learning style as well. I wish to ensure all Reception parents, the staff and I are absolutely aware of the priority of personal, social and emotional development and despite the new context will be ensuring this takes a priority as well as the English and Maths that I noted on the timetable. All Reception children in school during the Emergency care have been very happy and thrived whilst in school.