



## Virus Bulletin 9: Update for families

18.5.2020

### Summary:

- CVPS plans for our phased return to school
- Staggered start and finish times by class and one way drop off/collection system at the front of school
- Arrangements throughout school by class
- Childcare arrangements for May half term

Dear families,

We are delighted to be seeing light at the end of the tunnel, and inching towards some form of normality in day to day life following the prime minister's speech on Sunday. Guidance published on Monday suggests a solid framework for next steps, much of which CVPS had already put in place following a (virtual) senior leaders meeting we held on Monday morning.

While there will remain an element of risk — in the same way as there are risks each time we set foot outside our front door, cross roads, walk on footpaths past animals, ride a bike, drive a car etc — it does feel that we are in a safer position than when school was last fully open and the outbreak was approaching its peak.

Today, as I write, we currently have in school 28 children from critical workers or children classed as vulnerable. We are continuing to use social distancing, good hygiene procedures as well as the testing systems now available to us. We have had no children this half term who have presented any signs or symptoms of Covid-19, and all our teaching staff are well and healthy, with no absence. I am confident that, with the plans outlined below, we are compliant with all government guidance. The school is well prepared to be able to welcome children back, and start to provide families with greater continuity and consistency, in a safe environment that continues the support for children's learning as well as their social and emotional development.

### Whole school arrangements

In line with government advice — and if all the national statistics continue to see the R factor below 1 — we intend that on Monday the 8th June we will implement:

- A new one-way system, in and out of the school — coming in by the north-facing gate next to the school car park, and leaving by the east facing-gate, next to Little Angels/early years' usual gate.
- On arrival into the school grounds, you will be greeted at these gates by me and our new business and finance manager, Kerry Warren.
- Staggered start and finish times for children (we cannot deviate from these for families with siblings in more than one year group. Sorry!)

**YN — 8.15am to 11.15am, entering the early years rooms from the front of school**

**YR — 8.45am, to 2.45pm, entering the current Y1 classes through the front door, then going via the hall to Y1**

**Y1 — 9am to 3pm, entering the school through the front door**

**Y6 — 8.30am to 3.30pm, entering school via their usual door**

- Children will be grouped on arrival and asked to stand in two lines on the designated crosses marked at the front of school. Ideally parents will say goodbye there and then as they arrive, observing the one-way system as they leave. We will expect all parents when in the school grounds to model good social distancing at the 2 metre requirement. We can provide a friendly metre-stick to help you remember!
- On arrival into school, children will be greeted with a friendly face and the usual squirt of hand sanitiser. This follows the advice that we should wash our hands as soon as we arrive into home (or school) after being outside. We can't guarantee that children won't touch door handles and everything else when they arrive, so to sustain the safest outcomes we ask them to sanitise on arrival.

- Hygiene procedures throughout the day are as they were before lockdown, with children expected to wash their hands before and after moving to play outside or going home, and before and after lunchtime. This will be a total of 6 times per day minimum. We have supplies of barrier cream, as recommended by pharmacists, for those with sensitive skin. Our hand sanitisers are hospital grade with integrated emollients. Your child is welcome to bring their own hand sanitiser into school if you prefer, but only if they can manage dispensing it themselves.

Those children from other year groups, using school because they are unable to be cared for safely at home, will continue to arrive and leave from 8.30am to 2.30 (Y2) and 8.30am to 3.30pm for pupils in Y3, Y4 and Y5. There are no changes to these times from what has been currently available.

### **Classroom arrangements across school**

Once in school, children will be allocated a separate desk space, each with their own labelled pencils, and stationery that will stay on their desks. We will be grouping children across all the returners into groups no larger than 9 per typical classroom space. Individual children will be asked to keep to specific wash-hand basins and toilet cubicles, and their names will be placed on these to help them (and staff!) remember which ones are allocated to them.

### **Social distancing for our youngest children**

While we will obviously explain the importance of social distancing to the children, we cannot guarantee that they will observe this at all times. The government guidance recognises the difficulties that very young children have with the concept of socially distancing, and has risk-assessed it carefully. What we will guarantee, however, is that resources will be wiped down carefully two to three times daily by our dedicated cleaning teams. Any soft resources which cannot be cleaned will be removed. To create a balance of hygiene as well as to allow social interaction we plan to keep the children in their zones and gradually move around some of the resources between each of the three Y1 zones (carefully cleaning between use). Again regular handwashing will be continued as a focus.

### **Lunchtimes**

Lunchtimes will be at staggered times across school to allow Chef Lynn and her usual team to be able to transport meals, on trolleys, into the children's classrooms. Children will continue to use plastic cutlery, which has worked well over the lockdown and they will continue the menu which has been adapted without finger foods with an exception being made for the youngest children who find the plastic hard to use. Trolleys will be used to transport covered food around the outside of the building. Lynn, Nicola and Carla will be given a designated class each to cover consistently throughout the coming weeks, releasing one staff member per year group for their lunch break. This not only gives much needed continuity to the children but will also allow minimal risks of cross infection.

The children will have slightly longer to play outside in designated areas to help compensate for the many hours they have had to be in their homes during lockdown. Teaching staff always supervise them during these times and this practice will continue.

### **Online learning**

For the classes that are being re-introduced to school on this phased return, we will no longer be able to offer online learning as staff cannot continue to teach in school as well as manage an online programme of work. I am very keen that the staff have only the children in school to care for, and to care for them with full focus on the necessary new routines and consistent application of hygiene routines. This will also mean that online learning programmes will not continue. We cannot supply worksheets for home learning, nor teaching slides - although we can signpost families to the Oak Academy programmes.

For Y2, Y3, Y4 and Y5 children, online learning will continue as at present. Teachers from those classes will continue to work from home and will continue the teaching and learning programmes, with regular monitoring as well as safeguarding calls to home for the few children who don't show positive engagement levels.

### **Early years - Nursery**

Our youngest children will be welcomed into school and the nursery children entitled to 30 hours can attend for those hours as before.

They will exclusively use the usual nursery classroom or the reception classroom with both classes separated from one another. They will have access to all that classroom's resources and to all types of activities other than cooking — we feel cooking would represent one risk too many in the current climate. They will be grouped according to those who use 30 hours and those who do not, to allow the 30-hours children to continue into the afternoons without association with their peers. I'm so sorry if that causes families to have potential issues with friendship groupings. We have

thought carefully about the impact of only allowing all children to attend mornings as opposed to allowing groups to be according to attendance patterns, and concluded that overall, the impact on the children and their families would be more significant if families have to arrange separate childcare. Knowing the children, they are all very good at getting on with one another and we do not believe that any child will be adversely affected by it.

### **Early Years - Reception**

Reception children are going to get a taste of what Y1 is like a bit earlier than expected! They will be split across the Y1 and Y2 classroom - again with the welcome return of Rebecca Simmons as their class teacher. Rebecca will be joined by Gemma Mason who will be grouped with the children she already takes for Read, Write Inc, with planning and assessments overseen by Rebecca, as the children's class teacher. The Y1 classroom has been carefully laid out to give a sense of continuity from the reception class with a play-based approach. Those children who we feel need more of that will be placed in that class as their base room. The Y2 class accommodation will allow for a slightly more formal style of learning. We have checked our numbers and know that if we position the children carefully (and in line with social distancing) Rebecca will be able to stand between the two rooms and continue to lead the class with special storytimes so they get the same sense of community that they had before. It's so nice to be able to provide that again to our children. We look forward to being able to post photos onto Tapestry and Facebook pages so that you can all join with us, seeing some of their reactions and hopefully their positive responses.

### **Year 1**

The year 1 children will be accommodated in our specially created hall space, with all the advantages of the huge TV screen that we have there. Lisa, Tanya and Lindsay are really excited about having access to this. There will be zoned groupings of 5-6 children per group in Y1 and your children will all get to meet our new little girl who has enrolled during the lockdown! It is expected that the children stay and play alongside the others in their small zoned group, with plenty of access to the usual role play provision, construction, and creative areas. We will have to see how this goes in practice, but the aim is to support children to interact as safely as possible with one another after so long apart from their friends, and to minimise any risks of cross infection. Designated toilets will be allocated in their usual bathroom, so they can use the toilets regularly for handwashing. The hall will not be used as a thoroughfare by any staff or children during the school day, so it will be their own safe space. Lisa has some exciting ideas for lots of outdoor learning with a focus on physically active learning tasks that I know the children will enjoy.

We will use our professional judgement to join friendships amongst the children where we can, but we will also be considering other factors such as their read write inc stage of development. We are keenly aware that our youngest children will have missed-out to some degree the comprehensive approach to the teaching of reading as well as the many opportunities we would usually give for turn taking, sharing, and developing those all-important negotiation skills!

### **Year 6**

We anticipate that the Y6 pupils will be a lot more able to socially distance, although initially they will have access across two class spaces in Y5 and Y6 and will be able to spread across those. Sarah and her Y6 team have exciting plans to be using the outdoors a lot to enable her to teach all 16 of the Y6 children, and to be able to create some lovely memories that we feared they might be denied.

We are also in touch with the high school and have held numerous meetings to discuss the revised plans for transition to Y7, so it's an important part of the preparations.

While we are immensely disappointed that this year group was unable to enjoy the usual milestones (including the sats they worked so hard for during the rest of the year) we intend to give them a budget to be able to choose, within the current restrictions, some special things to do to mark the end of their time at CVPS. We would like every child from this class to contribute to that discussion and to start back on the 8th June to have their say.

### **All Staff (other than the class teachers in Y2, Y3, Y4, Y5)**

Staff will be in school next week preparing classes during our last week before we break for half term. While we have been asked to start tracking attendance again by the DfE there is no penalty other than socialising and missed learning and CVPS alongside other schools will not be in a position to fine or issue fixed penalties to families for poor attendance. As parents you have the autonomy to continue to keep your children off school, but we will endeavour for those in school, to ensure that everything we can possibly do **will** be done to assure families of their safety, alongside that of our staff.

### **Childcare arrangements over half term**

We have waited and waited for government guidance on the arrangements we are expected to offer over the May half term holiday period which has **not** been forthcoming and we are aware that time is ticking on.

The general consensus from other schools is that the half term period is a time when school staff are very much focussing on the safe re-introduction of 4 new year groups back into school and that necessarily this must be prioritised. Next term will be exceptionally busy in school - as we are all adapting to changes and creating new routines, systems and procedures. Having discussed with other headteachers alongside senior leaders in school, we have taken the decision not to offer childcare at CVPS during the half term on the basis that:

- Parents usually have access to alternative childcare providers during the May half term (schools have never previously been relied upon during holiday periods)
- The relaxation of 'stay at home' guidance allows alternative methods of care to be secured for children
- All families who are key workers are able to access childcare from their usual providers
- Take up of holiday care during Easter was very low
- School needs to have space from managing any childcare to prepare the building fully for the phased return
- There has been no government guidance to compulsorily open, and many schools nationally are closing to allow deep cleans, teacher set up of rooms etc

### **In summary**

I am aware that there are many children in the classes not covered by the phased return who are also desperate to get back to school and staff report regular conversations about how individual children are starting to struggle more and more with only online learning in place. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you think it would help for us to contact them, to chat things through or encourage them in their learning. It's going to be a busy time getting everyone into the swing of a new routine, but we know our children will all benefit from coming to school again and we know we can't wait to see them! We are busy working towards a new phasing for the remaining classes due still to return so there is still plenty going on behind the scenes - as there has been throughout lockdown!

When speaking to your children's class teachers please don't hesitate to let them know if you would like to discuss anything about the phased return.

With kindest wishes to all of you as we hopefully are starting to see a little bit of light at the end of our very long lockdown tunnel. Stay alert everyone - and I look forward to sharing my next update!

Debbie Wylie  
Principal