



Virus Bulletin 12: Update for families

5.1.2021

Summary:

- CVPS plans for our 2021 new lockdown - new guidance and we've done it before!
- Staggered start and finish times by class confirmed
- Arrangements throughout school by class
- Technology offers

Dear families,

Well once again we find ourselves at the start of another national lockdown, initiated by the issues in London and the South-East. While I'm extremely grateful that our rates are far lower than some areas of the country and while the return to lockdown is necessary, it would have been so much more straightforward for decisions to have been made earlier. As a school leader I'm sure you can appreciate being given conflicting instructions over such a short space of time has been extremely stressful for all school leaders, as well as staff and parents. My hope is that this really is the last push this term which will move the national picture into a different place and allow us to return to some normality and get the children back to consistent learning experiences in the way we know and love delivering.

My thoughts go out to all of you who now are at the point of getting back to having the children at home throughout the days and weeks. For some they will be pleased about this - but for others, the challenge of home working alongside home learning for children is testing. For other children the lack of social contact really affects mental health. The situation is hard for everyone for different reasons, and the cold weather gives less chances of enjoying the great outdoors in the way we did last spring on lockdown. Please don't hesitate to let school know if we can do anything to help.

Just to keep us on our toes even more - our guidance from the DfE has been revised, and changes to definitions of critical workers and vulnerabilities alongside the inclusion of nursery places being kept open, meant a full overhaul of the eligibility to school places yesterday. Thank you so much for your patience, and support. It has really been very much appreciated as you waited so patiently for the offer of places to be confirmed. It was really valuable that we were able to contact people as and when needed rather than respond to families asking if they had a place yet when we were working our socks off to get the task completed.

We used a carefully considered matrix scoring each child whose family had responded on the survey scoring key worker roles as well as vulnerability and were able to contact families with updates about the next steps today.

Before finalising the staffing arrangements we are still to revise our risk assessment (again) so that we can ensure that procedures in place continue to be robust and we are also reviewing the remote learning over the coming days to see if there are improvements we can make to cover the next 5 weeks before half term.

All the plans and risk assessments will be available on the school website reviewed by the end of this week if you wish to explore them further. (www.villageprimary.org)

Whole school arrangements

In line with the most recent government advice and our knowledge of what has worked well, we will continue with:

- The effective 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.
- Staggered start and finish times for children as listed below - these have changed so please check
- Use of the full school building, with lower numbers in each bubble
- Continued rigour with hygiene and cleanliness throughout school
- Continuation of only essential medical items being brought daily between home and school

	Monday to Friday start times (Monday to Thursday Finish times)	Friday finish time
YN	8.45am to 11.45am (15 and 30 hour children) line up at the front of school	1.45pm (30hr children)
YR	8.45am - 2.45pm lining up at community room door	1.45pm
Y1	8.15am to 3pm lining up at the front of school	1.50pm
Y2	8.15am to 3pm lining up at the front of school	1.50pm
Y3	8.15am - 3.15pm lining up at the front of school	1.55pm
Y4	8.15am - 3.15pm lining up at the front of school	1.55pm
Y5	8.30am - 3.30pm directly into the classroom through the Y6 door on arrival	2pm
Y6	8.30am - 3.30pm coming directly into the classroom through the Y6 door on arrival	2pm

- We really appreciate the support from families who have parked away from the roundabout in front of the school. This has made this a much safer place for those children who walk independently to school
- Children will continue to be asked either to wash hands, or sanitise hands on arrival and throughout the day
- Hygiene procedures throughout the day are as they were.

Classroom arrangements across school

All children from Y1 to Y6 will be allocated a set seat, and will work within a seating plan within their room. At the moment there are no more than 15 children per classroom space. There is an expectation that staff in classrooms will continue to remain 2 metres away from children. (clearly this won't be possible in early years - staff continue to use face guards for their own protection should they wish)

Desks in classrooms continue to be forward facing - so pupils do not face one another in line with government guidelines.

Social distancing for our youngest children Early Years and Year 1

Resources will continue to be wiped down carefully two to three times daily by our dedicated cleaning teams. Any soft resources have been 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 early years zones. Again regular handwashing will continue to be a focus.

Lunchtimes

Lunchtimes continue to be taken in the classrooms.

Outdoor play areas continue to be separated so that bubbles do not mix. Each classroom bubble has its own set of outdoor play equipment.

Curriculum, homework and online learning

We have surveyed all families and can ensure that all children at home now have access to devices as well as wifi if needed. We continue to minimise resources such as books and learning materials that are passed between home and school. There will be some opportunities for some home 'catch up' online tuition to take place.

We continue our aim to follow a broad and balanced curriculum, as described on the school website but ask that you let us know as soon as possible if you have technology issues so we can work with you to resolve them.

We will spend more time over coming days reviewing the current formats for delivering online learning and sense check the relevance and appropriateness of them for our children. We'll update you if we plan to make any changes.

Early years - Nursery and Reception

Nursery children will become one full bubble and will work in the pod. There will be regular reminders about not putting their hands into their mouths (!), as well as continuing to regularly wash their hands. We immediately exclude children who show any signs of higher temperatures, a new or persistent cough. Loss of taste and smell is difficult to diagnose in children so young.

Reception children will have access to one of the two classroom spaces where they were previously, alongside the previously used suite of resources.

Year 1 and Year 2

Children in these classes will join into one bubble, accommodated in the usual classrooms either for Y1 and Y2. They will be taught by their usual allocated teachers. We will be using a new phonics programme for all children across Y1 and Y2 which you will be informed about in time for Monday the 11th January, or beforehand if we can! This is the only different at the moment from last time.

Year 3

Children in Y3 will be accommodated across the current Y3 and Y4 classroom spaces, taught by at least one of their usual team - Mrs Costello and now Cheree McGowan a recently qualified teacher who has joined our CVPS team this week. (previously in Y2 and early years last term).

Year 4

Y4 will be accommodated in the hall. We are unable to use the hall for assemblies, PE, or all the things we would usually, so we intend to continue using it as a classroom which has worked really well so far.

Year 5 and Year 6

These two year groups will join together in the usual Y5/6 classrooms. Children of this age have (mostly) become used to socially distancing themselves during the forest school sessions, as well as during the rest of the school day when possible. They work better independently (on the whole) at that age, and they produce a greater quantity (and quality!) of online learning.

We appreciate that families have been very supportive of our current arrangements and we do want to reassure everyone that these plans will be regularly reviewed to prioritise safety of children and staff at all times. We are mindful that everyone has their own very different 'thermometers' relating to how they have approached the risks of Covid and so we intend to continue to be transparent so you can ask questions and make decisions about what's best for your children in terms of their physical, mental and educational health! We are happy to discuss any individual concerns relating to your child or family's extenuating circumstances and as a matter of course we will be updating our individual pupil and staff personal circumstances forms to keep information accurate. Please keep the communications open between your child's teaching staff and home so we can continue to adapt provision as necessary.

Technology

As said before, we are allocating chrome books to those families who do not have a device per child, working from Y6 down to Y3 as a priority. Please let us know if you have any issues and we will try and resolve these with you. Despite news in the press about a lack of devices, in recent weeks we have received an additional set of around 30 chromebooks from the DfE (Department for Education). On top of those the school purchased last year we have been really pleased that we are able to issue out so many devices to support high quality home learning for those who can learn readily from home.

In summary

We are confident in our plans to offer home learning as the next best option to face to face. We know that the high regard for Covid-Safe practices have worked well to date, and with a much smaller overall number of pupils in school the arrangements will reduce the risks of transmission rates in our community.

We are keen to hear of any concerns so we can respond to those in a timely manner as we embark on this (hopefully) final part of the remote learning journey.

Thanks once again for your ongoing support during these challenging times.

Debbie Wylie
Principal

