



Dear parents and carers,

I hope you, your children and wider family members are safe and well. I am sorry I have not been able to write to you sooner, I was waiting for clear and final guidance around the safe re-opening of the school.

Over the last few days schools have received several pieces of guidance from the Department of Education with significant updates being published each day. Throughout this period, here at Smithy Street, we have been working closely with the LA, Unions and other local schools, including Redlands to plan a safe way forward for children and staff.

This letter is for the attention of parents and carers of all children, but in particular for those with children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

In order to avoid confusion, and address concerns or anxieties, I would like to update you on the progress we have made towards opening the school after half term. From the outset, I would like to underline that the welfare of children and staff is at the forefront of the school's work and our focus is upon reducing risk when planning how to open. **It is also very important to realise that at this time we are unable to guarantee the safety of your child or family from infection or transmission of the virus.**

Our plans so far:

- To ensure safe social distancing the maximum class size will be up to **15** children
- **Most** children returning will **not** be taught by their own teacher, or in their own classroom.
- Children will remain in their group (or Bubble) with the same 2 members of staff for the foreseeable future unless they are absent or the situation changes. We aim for one of those to be a teacher.
- To begin with, only Year 6 will be returning to school. This will be on **4<sup>th</sup> June**. We aim to start Year 1 on **Jun 11<sup>th</sup>**. We have not yet decided when EYFS will start; this will depend of safety and the effectiveness of our planned procedures.
- We will confirm with each parent if they wish their child to come to school on the day before they are due to start. We will base staffing on confirmed numbers, so no parent should send their child to school unless this is pre-arranged and unless we know about it.
- The start of the day will be at **10 am** and the day will finish at **2 pm**. Children will have a hot meal at lunchtime. **In addition: Free School Meal children will still receive their food vouchers for now.**

- Parents will be asked to drop their child off by the **big** playground gate. Two members of senior staff will direct the children to areas of the playground where they will meet their relevant teacher and Bubble.
- Parents are asked to pick their child up at 2 pm. They must queue up outside the **small** gate, keeping a 2 metre social distance. Parents will be admitted by a senior member of staff, one at a time. Parents will pick their child up from the playground and will be expected to leave through the **big** playground gate. Parents must keep social distance from others at all times and are asked to leave straight away.
- Year 6 children are encouraged to arrive and leave independently
- Parents can only enter the playground and the building if they have made an appointment. Parents should not approach staff at drop off or pick up times, as they will be busy ensuring everyone can stay safe.
- Children of key workers and vulnerable children who have been attending school during lockdown can continue to attend from 9.00 to 3.30.
- There will not be any facility for a breakfast club or any after school clubs, including the child care club, in order to minimise overall risk of transmission of the virus.
- The school day will look very different from how it usually is. In Years 1 and 6 the children will be working in line with themes and work set on the online classroom we are currently offering. We are keeping this under review depending upon pupil and staff attendance or illness.
- Children and staff will be expected to wash their hands frequently throughout the day.
- Children will be required to sit separately at individual tables throughout the day and teachers will maintain a 2 metre distance where possible.
- Children will have breaks in their Bubbles, with the same staff members. At break times, children will be encouraged to stay apart but we cannot guarantee this will happen. They will only have break time with their small Bubble.
- Every child must bring their own water bottle as the drinking fountains will not be used. We will ask the children to clean their bottle when they come into the classroom. No other bags and equipment should be taken from home, including reading books and any bags.
- We ask parents to wash the school uniform each day, so children come in school with clean clothes. If this is difficult, parents may send children into school in their non-uniform clothes.
- We have an additional cleaner during the hours of 10am and 2pm, who will continually clean all touchpoints and toilets. However, it will not be possible to do

this each time they are used. We will only allow one child to use the toilets at any given time, and this will be done under supervision.

- No playground resources - climbing frames, toys, balls - will be used, as this risks transmission of the virus.
- All soft furnishings and hard to clean resources will be removed from classes.
- In the classroom, each child will have their own stationery and materials - nothing can be brought into school.
- We will clean any shared resources, or remove them for 72 hours, but will try and limit shared use as much as possible
- If a child or staff member displays COVID related symptoms they will be asked to go home and will be required to stay off school for at least 7 days. We would like for this child or staff member to be tested for COVID. If they test negative, they may come back to school sooner.
- The rest of the Bubble will be asked to stay at home for 14 days if a case of CV is confirmed. We will consult with Public Health if this is the case, who may advise to close the school for several days for a deep clean.
- Please do not send your child into school if they are unwell or if they display any COVID related symptoms (continuous new cough, fever, unable to smell or taste)
- School will **not open on Wednesdays** to children, (apart from those of key workers and vulnerable children) for planning and safety reasons. We will use this time to deep clean the buildings, plan and update the online learning.
- Some of the points above will be affected by the numbers of children who come to school. Dates are all subject to change, depending on Government advice.

**Parents are not required to send their children to school, and will not be penalised for not sending their child to school during this period.**

I fully understand the difficulties some parents are facing whilst supporting their children at home. It is also the case that many parents have real concerns about sending children back to school whilst the risk remains high. Whatever decision you make, please be assured that we will provide as much support as we are able to.

I will update you with more information at the start of June. In the meantime, please note the **school will be completely closed next week** for the half term break.

Thank you again for your messages of understanding and good wishes. We will continue to strive to support everyone in our community and to keep everyone as safe as possible.

I will be updating you soon with regards of the amalgamation of Smithy St and Redlands into Stepney Park Primary school. We have ordered new school uniforms (a logo'ed t-shirt and a jumper) for all children today, this will be given free of charge to all children in due course. I hope you will have a happy Eid this weekend, and a restful and enjoyable half term holiday

All the best  
Edith

Headteacher

Smithy Street Primary Street