Dear Parents and Carers,

Last week, the government announced its plan to begin re-opening schools to Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 as well as the children of key workers and those who are classed as vulnerable from 1st June. With this in mind, we have been busy putting together our plan. We would like to take this opportunity to outline what we aim to achieve and, hopefully, answer some of your questions. This information is relevant to all children that will be returning to school, including those that have been accessing the provision since 23rd March.

**Will my child be with their own teacher?**

The children will be split into 'bubbles’ of between 10 and 12 children. These bubbles will all be allocated a teacher; however, I cannot guarantee that your child will be with their normal class teacher. These bubbles will not mix with any other bubble in school therefore reducing the number of possible contacts for each child and each adult.

**Will my child be with their own class?**

The children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 6 will be with other children from their own year group, but not necessarily the same class. The key worker and vulnerable children in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be in mixed age group bubbles.

**Will social distancing be observed?**

The government have recognised that ensuring social distancing with young children is not always going to be possible. We will be encouraging the children to do so whenever possible and desks in classrooms will be placed as near to 2m apart from each other as possible. In Early Years, social distancing is much less likely to be possible as the children will be mixing and playing.

**Will my child be with their friends?**

Where possible, we will use our knowledge of the children to attempt to group them with some of their friends, but we cannot guarantee your child will be with all of their friends.

**Will my child always have the same teacher?**

Teachers and support staff will be allocated a bubble. These will not change to reduce the risk of spreading any viruses. Where some staff work part-time, that bubble will be allocated two teachers to cover the full week, but it will always be the same teachers.

**Will my child be sharing resources?**

Each child will be provided with a bag of basic equipment to minimise the amount of resources being shared however, particularly with EYFS, there will be sharing of resources. We have removed soft and wooden resources and will be regularly sanitising all other shared resources.

**Will staff be wearing PPE?**

No, staff will not be wearing PPE. The government have said this is not necessary and, particularly for the younger children, I believe that this could be quite intimidating.

**What will play and lunchtime play look like?**

Each bubble will be allocated an area that has been marked off for them on the playground and the field. Each bubble will be provided with a set of equipment for play which no other bubble will touch. During these times, the children will be able to play freely with the small number of children in their bubble. Children will only be able to play with the equipment we have provided and this will not include footballs.

**Will children be expected to wash their hands regularly?**

Yes, all children will wash their hands on arrival, before and after play, before and after lunch, and before going home in addition to whenever they use the toilet. All working rooms will have access to hand washing facilities and alcohol based sanitiser.

**What will happen if someone in my child’s bubble displays symptoms of Coronavirus?**

Children must not attend school if they are displaying symptoms and must go into isolation for 14 days, or until they have been tested and received a negative result. If children begin to display symptoms in school, they will be removed from the bubble and placed in the medical room to await collection by parents or carers. That child will then need to be tested. If their result is positive, then the whole bubble will be sent home to isolate. The bubble will only reopen after 14 days. If your child does not display symptoms but is sent home to isolate, the whole family does not need to isolate at this point.

**What is the plan regarding lunches?**

Unfortunately, the caterers are unable to provide us with hot meals at this time. They will be providing their packed lunch option. We request that all children who are entitled to a free meal take this provision as it prevents lunch boxes coming and going from home to school and therefore prevents the risk of transmission. All children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 will therefore be asked to choose a school meal. In addition, children who are entitled to a free school meal are asked to book a school packed lunch. If all other parents are able to buy a school lunch to prevent transmision of viruses from home to school, we would be very grateful. If, however, this is not something you are able to do, then please note all lunches must be provided in a disposable bag and please do not send in anything that needs to come home such as flasks, tupperware pots and spoons.

**Will my child be allowed to bring their water bottle?**

No, we request that your children do not bring a water bottle to school. We will provide your child with a named water bottle that only they will be using while they are in school. This will not go home but be refilled here and placed in the dishwasher at the end of each day.

**Will my child need to wear school uniform?**

Children do not have to wear uniform when we reopen from 1st June. This is because we are requesting that every child wears a clean set of clothes every day. We appreciate that owning multiple sets of uniform, especially when children will have grown over the last 9 weeks, is not the norm and that opportunities to buy more are limited at present. You do not need a fresh pair of shoes for each day, but we do insist on clean clothing to prevent viruses being spread.

**Will my child be able to wear a mask?**

The government guidelines on children wearing masks is quite clear in that they should not do so. This is because the risk of transmission of viruses is much greater when removing masks than when not wearing one if it is not done properly.

**What will happen if my child hurts themselves?**

We will continue to attend to children’s basic needs and will administer first aid within the bubble. Your child will be comforted by staff when needed.

**What will happen if my child needs a change of clothes?**

If children need a change of clothes due to a toileting accident, we will make an assessment for each child. If the child is able to change and clean themselves and we have enough spare clothing left in school, we will enable them to change. If your child needs help to do so, or we have run out of changes of clothing, then we will ask you to come and collect your child and bring them in again the following day.

**Will my child be able to go to breakfast club or after school clubs?**

Unfortunately, we will not be able to maintain bubbles if we run breakfast club and after school clubs and therefore this provision will not be available.

**Will my child come to school at the normal time?**

We will be inviting different bubbles to arrive at school at different times to ensure that we don’t have large crowds mixing outside of school. We will be asking parents to drop their children off at the gate and not come onto the premises. Bubbles will be met at St George’s Road gate by their teachers - children will not be expected to walk around to their classrooms on their own. We will also deliver them back to you at St George’s Road gate. We will not be opening Buckingham Road gate as social distancing cannot be maintained on the small path leading to the playground.

**When will I know what time to bring my child to school?**

As soon as we have confirmed numbers of children returning to school, we will put the children into their bubbles and then notify you of the start time. The government will be announcing on 28th May whether the science says that it is safe for schools to reopen in this way and we will confirm this with you shortly after.

**Will my child be able to bring anything to school with them?**

We request that no children bring anything from home with them to school. We will not be changing reading books and will continue to send all communication electronically. The children will do PE in their clothes and so not need a change. We wish to reduce the amount of possible transmissions by not having bags and other belongings going backwards and forwards.

**Will there additional cleaning in school?**

Yes, regular touchpoints (banisters, door handles and toilets) will be cleaned frequently throughout the day.

**Will my child be doing ‘proper’ schoolwork?**

Yes, we will be resuming the learning for all children in school as soon as we reopen more wildly.

**If my child is not returning, will they still have access to the learning being provided by school?**

Yes, the home learning projects will continue to be set.

**Will this be a full-time offer?**

For many years now, the government have stated that teachers must be provided with an afternoon’s worth of time out of class to allow them to do some of the tasks which enable the best learning experiences possible for your children. This is called PPA time and is a government non-negotiable. At Chestnuts, we normally provide this by the children have PE sessions with Miss Kemp or Jigsaw sessions with Mrs Thompson, Mrs Bromley or Mrs Gore so that they have someone familiar to them each week. They may have told you about these times at home. I still have a legal obligation to provide teachers with this time as these tasks still need to be performed but we cannot allow any other adults into the bubbles to work with the children. With this in mind, we have decided to close on Friday afternoons to all children except the children of key workers. We discussed many options but decided to use Friday as we had heard that other schools in Milton Keynes were also planning to close on Friday afternoons and wanted to link up as much as possible to make it easier for those of you with children in different schools.

**What if I change my mind?**

If at this point, you do not wish to send your child back to school you will not be fined. If you decide in a week or two that you would like your child to join a bubble, please contact the school and we will arrange for this, however please note, we will only be introducing new children on Mondays.

I realise this has been a lot of information to take on board, but I hope that this begins to answer some of your questions, although I appreciate you may have lots more. If you would like to speak to someone about any questions or concerns you may have, please contact the school office by phone or email and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Guidance and updates from the Department for Education are still coming through daily and therefore we may need to make additional changes but will keep you informed.

To enable us to finalise everything, we need your help. Please can all parents or carers complete the relevant questionnaire to let me know if you plan to send your child back to school. Key workers and parents or carers of vulnerable children do NOT need to do this as we already have this information from you although please do book lunches if you are able to. These questionnaires will close at **midnight on Sunday 24th May.**

Also, please book your lunch using the link below.

[Reception Booking Form](https://forms.gle/xQhToDbHZawL1kj99)

[Year 1 Booking Form](https://forms.gle/BWDKDMdfoGx2ZsgS6)

[Year 6 Booking Form](https://forms.gle/kYXHmUfNAkB6Znhj8)

[Packed Lunch Booking Form](https://forms.gle/PbRrsqKhopdAwWpw6)

Yours faithfully,



Becky Skillings

Headteacher