



### Lowick and Holy Island C of E First Schools

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21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to update you further on the plan for the wider re-opening of schools and with information about Lowick and Holy Island schools in particular. There is a lot of information to share with you so this letter is going to be a long read. However, it is important you take the time to read it through as well as the government advice and guidance so that you are able to make a well-informed decision regarding sending your child back to school.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

Firstly, we will only be undertaking a wider re-opening if the government's five tests are met:

- Making sure the NHS can cope
- Evidence showing a sustained and consistent fall in daily death rates
- Reliable data showing the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels ( $R < 1$ )
- Being confident in the range of operational challenges, like ensuring testing and the right amount of PPE, are in hand
- Being confident any adjustments will not risk a second peak

However, please note that school will be open for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. For the list of critical workers and vulnerable children definitions please follow this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

I am working closely with all the Head teachers in the Berwick Partnership, all of our staff, Unions, County, HR and the Governors to ensure we are safe to proceed. If conditions change, it may be that we have to close the school or alter the provision in order to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

### Our Partnership Agreement

We have broadly agreed the following factors within the Berwick Partnership. Every Head teacher also has to take into account the individual needs of their own children, staff and setting.

- Head teachers and Governors reserve the right to amend the offer of provision at any point based on the scientific evidence and guidance provided daily from the Government, and in response to any cases of coronavirus within our setting.

- June 1st 2020 is the **very earliest** point at which schools can begin to offer places to children in Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y6.
- The provision will be a modified version and not the typical school routine, groupings, class arrangements, teacher or curriculum content.
- The provision will be over **4 days per week, Monday - Thursday** to allow for teacher's entitlement to planning and preparation time, to allow 72 hours for any virus on surfaces in school to degrade and for deep cleaning on Friday.
- Provision for critical workers who cannot keep their children at home will be provided on Fridays if absolutely necessary.
- Drop off and collection times may be staggered to minimize 'pinch points' at school gates and where possible different groups or 'bubbles' of children will have separate entry/exit points.
- Berwick Partnership schools will amend and adopt the Northumberland County Council Health and Safety Risk Assessment as a model.
- Parents and staff accept that 2 metre distancing cannot be expected in Early Years or Primary settings and we can only mitigate risk through:
  - Minimising contact and mixing of groups
  - Regular cleaning of the setting and resources
  - Frequent handwashing
  - Encouraging good respiratory hygiene (such as catch it, kill it, bin it)
- Children will be allocated to a mini-group (a bubble) of around 10, maximum 15, children with a specified adult and they will remain together as a unit throughout the child's time in school to minimise cross over with other 'bubbles' in the school.
- Children and staff will remain in their 'bubble' for break times and meal times.
- Parents and staff must accept that if any one member of the 'bubble' develops Covid 19 symptoms then all members of the group and their families must self-isolate for 14 days or until a test proves negative with no further symptoms.
- Parents will not be fined for their child's non-attendance
- Children will not be able to bring anything in from home, including lunches
- Schools will provide lunches to those children in the setting (with the same arrangement as before the lockdown: free for children eligible for universal school meals but there would be the usual charge for years 3 and 4 and any nursery age children staying for lunch.)
- Children wear their own clean clothes each day, suitable for a range of fitness/outdoor/craft activities. Uniform is not required – anything which is easy to clean is recommended.
- PPE will not be worn as a general rule but must be worn by staff when administering first aid or intimate care.
- Home-schooling planning and cross curricular activities and ideas will continue to be available for children learning at home.
- Behaviour expectations in school will include encouraging the children to keep to the hygiene and safety rules to minimise risk for everyone.

#### **Specific advice and routines for our setting**

##### **Our proposed phased return is as follows:**

- Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June:** Any school aged **vulnerable children or children of key workers** whose parents/carers want them to attend. They will be with the member of staff for their class (see below)
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June:** **Reception and Year 1 children** (class 1) These children will be with Mrs Strangeways.
- Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June:** **Nursery children** – Miss Adams and Miss Easten will have the nursery children. They will stay separate from the main school building but will still use the outdoor areas.
- Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June:** **Year 2, 3 and 4 children** (class 2) – Mrs Stiansen and Mrs Waddington will have these children.

**Before school childcare will only be available where absolutely necessary to enable key workers to return to work.**

Please note that if your child, or a member of your household, is shielding or considered to be clinically vulnerable your child should not attend school.

It is important to remember that if your child has any of the Covid-19 symptoms, and especially a persistent cough, temperature or loss or change in taste or smell, they must be kept at home and not brought to school.

### Other changes

- Once we have more than one 'bubble' back in school, we will put in place staggered drop off and pick up times to help relieve congestion. Nursery can still come round to the yard and drop off and pick up outside the nursery building. Classes 1 and 2 will be using the external doors on their classrooms to allow parents/carers to wait on the grass slope / wooden stage area. This will allow you to maintain social distancing rules. Parents and carers will not be able to come into the school building except by appointment. Where possible, only one parent/carer should drop off or pick up to reduce congestion.
- Children will remain with their 'bubble' all day and the bubbles will not mix. They will have separate play times and will eat lunch in the classroom. Margaret will be providing grab and go / packed lunch style lunches with an option with a 'takeaway' style lunch for Thursdays.
- Children will not be able to bring in any book bags, pencil cases or anything else from home. Exceptions will be their coat, any essential medicine or items necessary to prevent harm such as suncream. For nursery children, they can bring in nappies, wipes and a change of clothes and these will be kept in their boxes.
- Children will be allocated their own resources to use in school and have their own desk and chair. Social distancing will be encouraged as much as possible in an age appropriate way. We will also allocate outdoor toys and equipment each week so they can still play with a range of items but reduce sharing as much as possible.
- We will remove all soft furnishing, soft toys and dressing up clothes and other things which are difficult to clean from classrooms in line with the guidance. We will regularly wipe down surfaces through the day. We will try our best to still keep the school as a welcoming environment.
- Reading books will be allocated but will need to be kept separate, in a drop off box on their return. After 72 hours they can be put back into circulation.
- Our curriculum will be modified. In school, we will have a learning theme of 'medicine and keeping healthy' and plan to be outdoors as much as possible during the school day.
- If your child develops symptoms during the day, they will be isolated until they can be collected as soon as possible. It is very important that all parents remain easily contactable during the school day for this reason.

### What to do if you wish your child to return to school:

If you are a key worker requiring your child to attend school to enable you to go to work, if your child is in the vulnerable category or if your child is in Reception or Year 1 then they may return to school from 1<sup>st</sup> June.

If you haven't already been in touch, you will need to email [admin@lowick.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@lowick.northumberland.sch.uk) as soon as possible to let us know that you would like your child to return to school on that date and to confirm what your childcare needs are. We will need notice to prepare suitable packs of resources for each child – at the very latest we would need know by Wednesday 27th May. We will then contact you with information about specific drop off and pick up arrangements and so forth.

If you have a nursery child your child can return from 15<sup>th</sup> June. If you have a class 2 child, they can return from 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Please email us at the latest **by Monday of the week before** to let us know your needs so that we can prepare for suitable numbers.

Please be aware that the above is subject to change; guidance and information about the national and regional situation are regularly updated and we will need to respond to any update as required. We will do our best to keep you informed through our website, email and Facebook page.

Our school is going to look very different and it is your decision about what is right for your child. We will support and respect whatever choice you make.

Please accept our thanks for your kindness, consideration and understanding at this challenging time.

Kind Regards

*Rebecca*