

22nd May 2020

From Mrs Eley

Firstly, I would like to say a big thank you to all of you, not only for your patience whilst we were putting detailed plans together, but also for your overwhelming support and appreciation when the plans were sent to you. Some of you, understandably, still had a few questions, some of which were unique to your child which Miss Griffiths or I answered personally but I have also collated a list of questions that are more general and ones that you may not have thought of, which I will answer below.

Secondly, I would like to reassure you that we completely understand and support the decision you have made about whether to send your child back to school or not. Whatever you have decided, it is the **right choice**. I am sure many of you have thought long and hard about this and have made your decision based on your own personal circumstances and we support your decision wholeheartedly.

Will both schools definitely reopen to more pupils on June 1st?

The simple answer is I DON'T KNOW.

The Government will announce their decision on Thursday 28TH May. I am sure many of you will be watching this briefing but we will contact you on Friday 29th May via Seesaw. Whatever happens, the children of Keyworkers will be accommodated as needed.

When will schools reopen for the rest of Y2, Y3, Y4 and Y5?

The simple answer is NOBODY KNOWS.

The Government will continue to monitor the situation and we will let you know as soon as we know anything.

If I have said 'no' to week one, can I change my mind?

The simple answer to this is NO for week one.

We have planned on the basis of maximum numbers for week one. We will be asking all parents who are keyworkers and have children in eligible year groups again during week one so we can then plan for week 2. It will be at that point that you can change your mind.

Will the children who remain at home continue to receive work via Seesaw?

The simple answer is YES.

The children who are in the eligible year groups (Nursery, Reception, Y1 and Y6) will continue to have the work uploaded as usual so if your child is not at school, please continue to do the fantastic job you have been doing of using this to help home school your children. Those that are in school in these year groups will still have access to this as it will be loaded to the whole year group, but will be doing work at school instead.

The children in Y2, Y3, Y4 and Y5 will also continue to receive work in the same way and again, please continue to use this work in the same way that you have been doing – you are doing an amazing job!

I have asked teachers not to set any work over half term as both Newton Regis and Austrey will close. This will give everyone time to have a complete break and recharge their batteries.

What if my child had grown out of their uniform?

The rationale behind asking the children to wear uniform is to try to make school feel as normal as possible. There is obviously no expectation for you to go out and buy new uniform, especially in Y6, but could you please try your best to send them in clothes that are closest to uniform as possible e.g. their polo shirt may fit but they may need to wear plain tracksuit bottoms or shorts. Please use common sense over this and not send them in football strips or their best clothes as we will be doing as much outdoor learning as possible and I do not want them worried about ruining their clothes. We have already said that they can come in trainers for the same reason. The most important thing

that we are asking that they put on **clean clothes every day** which I know can be difficult with uniform if you do not have time to wash the uniform every night.

What can my child bring to school?

The simple answer to this is ONLY WHAT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

Your child is asked to bring a clearly named and freshly filled water bottle each day. This will be sent home to wash and refilled for the next day. If they are not having lunch provided by the school, they can bring a packed lunch in a disposable bag that can then be thrown away when they have finished eating. Please do not send your child with books, pencil cases etc. from home. Everything they need will be provided by school. If the weather is hot and sunny, please put sunscreen on your child at home and not send it into school for them to put on themselves as normal health and safety and safeguarding policies will still apply. Please also remember to send warm clothes if it is cool and a sunhat if it is sunny.

Will my child be given fruit at break time?

The current answer to this is NO.

If your child would like a mid-morning snack, please send them with a healthy snack such as a piece of fruit or cereal bar which they will keep in their own drawer.

Is the Culmington Manor trip going ahead?

The simple answer is NO.

It is with regret that we have finally had to make the decision to cancel this trip. We have been holding off in the hope that it may have been able to go ahead and I know this will be extremely disappointing for the children and the staff. Mrs Harvey and Mrs Pick will be issuing **full refunds** as soon as possible. On a brighter note, the hoodies for Kingfishers and Mandarin have all been ordered and we will be giving those out (or delivering them) as soon as they arrive at school.

There will also be a leaflet that the central team at BDMAT have produced in consultation with Headteachers that will be displayed outside the school gates too.

If you do have any more questions that I have not answered, please contact us in the usual way and we will endeavour to do our best to answer them. The Newton School office will be manned until 3.30pm today and Miss Griffiths and I will be available to answer your queries via seesaw on Tuesday and Friday of next week.

To the children ..

Children, I've tried to answer some of the questions you may have down below, if you have any different ones upload them onto Seesaw.

Can I come back to school yet?

This depends on a couple of things, if your parent's jobs are important for keeping the country running then you are able to come to school, if they are going to work and need us to help look after you. This has been happening for some children in school for the past eight weeks. The government also announced that after half term some year groups might be able to come back to school IF the scientists decide it is safe enough. They have decided that this would be the Ducklings, Wagtails, Year 1 children in Harlequin and Robins and Y6 children in Kingfishers and Mandarin.

Who decides if I come to school?

If you are in one of the groups or classes I have mentioned above, then your parents and carers make the decision about whether you come to school or not. If they decide it is safe for you to come, then that is the right choice for your family, if they decide they do not want you to come to school, then that is also the right choice. Nobody will get in trouble for their decision.

I want to come to school but I'm in a different class?

I'm really sorry but at the moment we can't let you come back to school unless your parents are key workers and need us to look after you. The Government have given us really strict guidance that we must use to make sure we keep our School family safe. Your teachers will carry on setting you work and activities on Seesaw so you will need to carry on doing your work at home at the moment.

Are all the teachers at school ok?

Yes, staff at school have followed all the rules that the Government set when we went into lockdown and we've been lucky. We're all healthy and able to come into work, some schools have had lots of staff get poorly and they might not be able to open on June 1st.

What will it be like if I come back to school?

It will be different; you will either be in a small group of other children whose parents are key workers or with a group of people from your class. There will be no assembly and you will eat your lunch in the classroom or have picnics outside. When you go out to play it will just be your group, you won't mix with the other groups at all and there will be a lot of handwashing! You will do some work and then some other activities that the staff have planned for you.

Will I come to school every day?

You might not be able to come every day because we have to make sure that we keep to a small number of children to make it safe. The children of key worker families will be able to come every day if they need to, but for other classes in week one you will be coming back 3 or 4 days. Your grown-ups have been sent a timetable. For the following weeks, it will depend if a lot of people from your class come back.

Easter Bonnet competition at Austrey

These are currently being judged and the Easter eggs are still at school and in date. We will let you know the winners straight after half term and find a safe way of delivering the prizes.

I am really looking forward to meeting more of you after half term if the government say it is safe for you to come back and I will have to be patient and wait to meet the rest of you soon. Your teachers are not giving you any work for next week as it is half term so do lots of playing and have lots of fun but most, importantly be good for your parents as they have been doing a great job looking after you and they need a break too!

Take care everyone and enjoy your half term break.