

15th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Phased wider opening of Tatworth Primary School

Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on 10 May, we are writing to let you know that the staff have been working tirelessly to plan for a safe, phased wider opening which takes into account the national guidance.

The government has announced its roadmap towards recovery, including plans for the phased return of some children to education settings from 1 June.

Covid-19 has brought with it stress, uncertainty and anxiety for us all, including our children. We need to make sure any return is safe for children's physical and emotional well-being.

Somerset County Council have considered a local approach on how to implement the government guidance across Somerset in a manner that enable schools, parents and pupils to adapt to new arrangements in a managed way. We have had LA support to follow our own approach taking into account details from our own risk assessments and in consultation with Directors and staff.

We have always had safety as our driving force and our offer will reflect this even if it deviates away from the Government statement. What is known is that any return for children will not look the same as before Covid-19, as the pandemic has changed things for us all both in the short and longer term. There will need to be consideration of how we best support children and young people through this period.

We have asked for clarity on a number of questions from the Department for Education, Somerset's Local Authority, Regional Schools Commissioner, our cluster schools, our Health and Safety advisor and been in consultation with our governing body to consider the approach to starting back for more children from 1st June.

There will be no pressure on parents to send their children to school and no fines applied to parents who decide to not send their children to school.

The priorities for young children on starting back at school will be getting used to new school routines with an initial focus on mental health and wellbeing. We ask that you be mindful that the offer from school will not be a return to the full curriculum and timetable.

For those families who choose to not send their children to school or for families with children in Year 2, 3, 4 or 5, we will continue to support remote learning opportunities over the coming weeks. The offer takes into account that some staff will be supporting children in school therefore, the teacher assigned to the Class Dojo or Tapestry class may not necessarily be your child's usual class teacher.



Love learning, work together, achieve and shine.

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We are very aware of the many questions you may have and the plan will only move forward where we are confident that the risk management arrangements and planning that has been put in place, make it safe to do so.

One area, where there have been a number of questions to school, has been around making the decision regarding sending your child to school.

I appreciate this is not an easy decision to make, that needs to be an individual and informed choice. I will be sending a separate letter early next week, giving more details about our phased return and the initial plan. I am presently having staff meetings and meetings with our Board of Directors, as well as consultations with our H&S specialist and information from Regional Schools Commissioner, Department for Education and Local Authority. Of course, it is also dependent on whether the science supports a change from 1st June. I want to ask families to read the detail below, which is from the government guidance and highlights that for some of our children who may be classed as clinically vulnerable, they will need to get medical advice before they return.

Should I keep my child at home if they have an underlying health condition or live with someone in a clinically vulnerable group?

Children and young people who are considered extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should continue to shield and should not be expected to attend.

Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. A minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

Children and young people who live in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and shielding should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and the child or young person is able to understand and follow those instructions.

Children and young people who live with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) as defined in the social distancing guidance and including those who are pregnant, can attend.

Clinically vulnerable people

If you have any of the following health conditions, you are clinically vulnerable, meaning you are at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if you do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household.

Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
- chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions, treatments like chemotherapy, or medicines such as steroid tablets
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)



The following link may also be useful (it was updated today):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

Our plan from 1st June includes closing the school for a preparation day, except for children of key workers and vulnerable groups and closing the school for all children except children of key workers and vulnerable groups, every Friday to allow for deep cleaning.

The dates below shows that we will phase our return for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6.

Commencing	School open to cater for following groups:
1 June	Children of Key Workers Vulnerable Groups* Staff preparing site, classrooms, and briefings and testing arrangements.
2 June onwards	Children of Key Workers and Vulnerable Groups Reception children
4 June onwards	Children of Key Workers and Vulnerable Groups Reception children Year 1 children
5 June	School closed except for children of Key Workers and Vulnerable Groups for deep clean

We hope to invite our Year 6 children to school from w/c 8th June, however we may have to rota these children.

I will be sending further information early next week.

Please can I ask that you continue to update us with the details of which children may be returning as this very much feeds into our offer of return.

Kind regards



Tracey Hart
Headteacher

