



22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to provide you with further information about our plans to gradually re-open school from the 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

First of all I would like to thank you for your patience while you have been waiting for news – I know it is a challenging time for you for a whole variety of reasons and uncertainty and change can add to all of our stress levels.

I have to say that it has been an extremely challenging process for myself and the team to follow the government's guidance for reopening which not only sets an aspirational target to allow Key Worker, Vulnerable, Year R and Year 1 pupils to return to school but also sets out strict health and safety guidelines which we must follow including keeping class sizes to a maximum of 15, but in the context of our school these will remain at 10, and ensuring these class groups and their teachers do not mix with other class groups.

I am pleased to say that, after a lot of work and consultation with staff, the Trust that governs our school and the Local Authority, we have come up with an agreed plan which I believe will keep our pupils and staff safe and allow the specified pupils to have a happy transition back into school.

I will now set out the safety measures we are putting in place ready for reopening which are in accordance with government guidance and then the timetable for reopening.

### **Safety Measures**

When deciding to open schools to younger children the government has based its decision on scientific evidence which states that there is *'high scientific confidence that children of all ages have less severe symptoms than adults if they contract coronavirus'*.

The government has laid out strict health and safety guidelines for all schools which we will be following. These form a series of layers of protection which will reduce the risk of the virus spreading. It is vital that you as parents are aware of your essential role in following these guidelines. It is important that you as parents and carers understand that we cannot guarantee that the virus will remain out of our school.

These are:

Central Hall, St Mary Street, Southampton, SO14 1NF

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### 1. Minimise contact with symptomatic members of the community.

Staff and pupils will be expected to strictly adhere to government guidelines if they or any members of their household are experiencing any of the Coronavirus symptoms. If they or a member of their household have a **high temperature**, a **new continuous cough** or a **loss or change to your sense of taste or smell** they will need to self-isolate. The person displaying symptoms will be expected to self-isolate for 7 days and any household members will need to self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptoms began. The government have now introduced a testing system. If the symptomatic person gets a negative test result, then they and their household will be allowed to stop self-isolating and the pupil will be allowed to return to school. The school will need evidence of the negative test result.



### 2. Strict hand hygiene

From the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic we have all become accustomed to the importance of handwashing. At school we are ensuring that children have regular supervised handwashing routines at significant moments in the school day such as on arrival, after going to the toilet, before eating and before leaving school.



**CATCH IT.**



**BIN IT.**



**KILL IT.**

### 3. Strict oral hygiene

We will continue to train the children to use a tissue if they sneeze or cough and then place used tissues in lidded bins.



### 4. Enhanced cleaning regime

We have agreed an enhanced cleaning schedule which will ensure all touched surfaces are cleaned thoroughly at the end of every day. This will not only include furniture, but all equipment touched by pupils and staff. As you will see in our reopening schedule below, we have also made the decision to use Wednesdays as an extra deep cleaning day meaning the school will not be open to any pupils.



### 5. Small class 'bubbles' do not mix with each other

Schools have been asked to reduce class sizes to a *maximum* of 15 and to ensure that these class groups and the staff with these groups do not mix where possible. The government is well aware the children, particularly



younger children, are unable to stick to the social distancing 2m rule. As a school we will do what we can to encourage social distancing through the way we set up classrooms and activities. However, the idea of small bubble groups is that even if/when children do forget to socially distance this will be with a small, consistent group of pupils and staff.



#### **6. Social Distancing**

While we know that young children will struggle to remember social distancing we have been advised to do our best to train children to stick to the social distancing rules as best they can. Classrooms and other spaces have been set up in a way that will help children to do their best to stick to the 2m rule. This is hard for many of us to imagine and it seems hard to think of our children not being able to play with their friends in the same way as they did before. We have to remember that this is a temporary arrangement and children on the whole are very adaptable and resilient. The children have also witnessed how adults are having to socially distance and will have already become familiar with what is happening around them. Our staff team will approach this with care and understanding so that pupils are supported to understand the temporary changes that we are having to make.

Another really important aspect of social distancing is around protecting you as parents and carers. We will expect that when dropping off and picking up adults will model to children how to socially distance in a friendly way – think about we now queue up when we go shopping! We strongly discourage any gatherings as a group of parents outside the school building.

Please arrive promptly at the allocated drop off and pick up and not early. If you are early, please use this time to take a walk around the block. Equally please collect promptly at your allocated time. Being late will have an impact on other groups and staff who need to collect their own children from emergency provision.

Parents will not be permitted to enter the building without a prearranged appointment unless there is an emergency. All meetings with staff will need to be conducted over the telephone. Staff have been given the choice to wear a face mask when talking to parents/other adults only (not the children). Please do not be offended or alarmed if they have made this choice. We want to make our staff feel as comfortable as they can in these circumstances too.

Lovely Hat Collectives will continue to be held on-line.

Soft-starts and ends will not resume until further notice.



## Reopening Timetable

Before you go further to read our plans to reopen, I have to say that we have done our best with the classrooms and staff we have. These have been measured and marked out according to the 2M distancing and some furniture and furnishings removed as per guidelines. We have 4 classrooms which can safely accommodate 41 pupils and we have been asked to welcome back all of our Year R and 1 pupils as well as the Y2 priority groups which is a total of 85 pupils. Alongside this we also have to adhere to the 'class bubble' system which means that teachers can only work with one group.

In order to make this work safely and fairly we are employing a rota system for Adventurers and we may need to introduce a rota system for Explorers if more parents/carers decide to send their children back to school. So within these confines the plan is as follows:

**Reception** pupils will be split into 4 class 'bubbles' with no more than 13 children in each. They will be allocated two familiar adults including a teacher and teaching assistant. They will be based in one of the Reception classrooms downstairs. Mrs Chart is now on Maternity leave so one of the groups will be led by her cover Mrs Chadwick who has taught in school on a supply basis before.

During the first week of opening – **w/b 2<sup>nd</sup> June** (1<sup>st</sup> June scheduled INSET day) – Each class bubble will have **one day** in school either Tuesday or Thursday. This will be an orientation day.

During the following week **w/b 8<sup>th</sup> June** each class bubble will have **two days** in school on either Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday.

On Wednesdays school will be closed for deep cleaning and staff will use the day to prepare lessons and support pupils working from home.

**The class teachers will be in touch by Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May in order to let you know your child's class group allocation. Please let the school know if you do want a school place as soon as possible. Please be supportive and understanding that not all children will have been placed in a group with all of their friends. Family groups have been placed in the same group (e.g. our twins). Please do not extra pressure on our staff by making personal requests for staff and groups at this time (with the exception of key workers letting us know days).**

**Year 1 pupils** will initially be split into two class bubbles and will be allocated two familiar adults including a teacher and teaching assistant. These groups will be based in either the current Explorers' classroom or the Pioneers' classroom.

During the first week of opening – **w/b 2<sup>nd</sup> June** (1<sup>st</sup> June scheduled INSET day) – Each class bubble will have **three days** in school on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

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During the following week **w/b 8<sup>th</sup> June** each class bubble will have **four days** in school on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

**On Wednesdays school will be closed for deep cleaning and staff will use the day to prepare lessons and support pupils working from home.**

**Key Worker and Vulnerable Pupils in Reception** can choose if they would like to be with their peers for two days OR in a Year 1 bubble so that they can be in school for four days. Y1 and 2 Key worker and vulnerable pupils will be included in the Y1 bubbles.

***After two weeks we will review the system.*** If more Y1 pupils ask for school places after this **we may need to reduce the number of days Y1 pupils can come into school** in order to accommodate them.

**Class teachers will be in touch with you by Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May to let you know which group your child has been allocated. Do let the school know if you want a school place as soon as possible. Again, please do not make requests based on friendships/staff as the groups are being very carefully planned for what is best and safest for the children and staff.**

It is important to note that once a pupil has started attending one of the class bubbles they will not be able to swap groups.

If a member of a class group has symptoms of Coronavirus the whole group will need to self-isolate for 14 days **if they test positive for the virus.**

***If you decide you do want your child to start back at school you must contact the school first. You cannot just arrive at school and expect a place if it has not been arranged.***

#### **Timetable w/b 1<sup>st</sup> June**

Staff	Class Group	Location
Miss. Pollard <b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June</b> 09.15 – 14.45	Reception 1	B Adv Classroom
Mrs. Bryant <b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June</b> 09.15 – 14.45	Reception 2	B Adv Classroom
Mrs. Lowry <b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June</b> 09.00 – 14.30	Reception 3	G Adv Classroom

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Mrs. Chadwick <b>Thursday</b> 09.00 – 14.30	Reception 4	G Adv Classroom
Mrs. Woodman <b>Tues, Thurs, Fri</b> 09.00 – 14.45	Y1 + Y1 Key Worker and Vulnerable	Y1 Classroom
Miss. Hill <b>Tues, Thurs, Fri</b> 09.15 – 15.00	Y1 + Y2 Key Worker and Vulnerable	Y2 Classroom

#### Timetable w/b 8<sup>th</sup> June

Staff	Class Group	Location
Miss. Pollard <b>Monday and Tuesday</b> 09.15 – 14.45	Reception 1	B Adv Classroom
Mrs. Bryant <b>Thursday and Friday</b> 09.15 – 14.45	Reception 2	B Adv Classroom
Mrs. Lowry <b>Monday and Tuesday</b> 09.00 – 14.30	Reception 3	G Adv Classroom
Mrs. Chadwick <b>Thursday and Friday</b> 09.00 – 14.30	Reception 4	G Adv Classroom
Mrs. Woodman <b>Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri</b> 09.00 – 14.45	Y1 + Y1 Key Worker and Vulnerable	Y1 Classroom

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Miss. Hill <b>Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri</b> 09.15 – 15.00	Y1 + Y2 Key Worker and Vulnerable	Y2 Classroom
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### What happens next?

This is a lot of information to process – so do read this document thoroughly. I am also sending through a document outlining the expected behaviour for pupils and will add some more details about things like what pupils can wear, lunchtimes and drop-off and pick up arrangements – so please read this document carefully too. If you have any questions please can you email them to [Theresa.finking@hopecommunityschool.org](mailto:Theresa.finking@hopecommunityschool.org).

If you have already contacted the school to say you do want a place for your child, you will receive a group allocation next week. If you have said that you are not sure about a school place, please can you contact us to let us know your decision as soon as possible so that we can finalise our class groups. A number of you have not told us if you are going to send your child back to school – this is making finalising groups difficult so please do let us know one way or another.

If you decide not to send you child to school you will not get fined and teachers will set work on class Dojo every week.

You can of course change your mind, but as stated earlier, if you do decide that you want to send your child in on a later date you must discuss this with us so that we can arrange class groups safely. ***Please understand that might mean they cannot start immediately.***

In order to prepare your children for returning to school please will you go through the social stories that will be provided to parents via Class Dojo – this will prepare them for how different school is going to be!

I look forward to seeing some of you again soon.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Wright (Principal, Hope Community School Southampton)

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